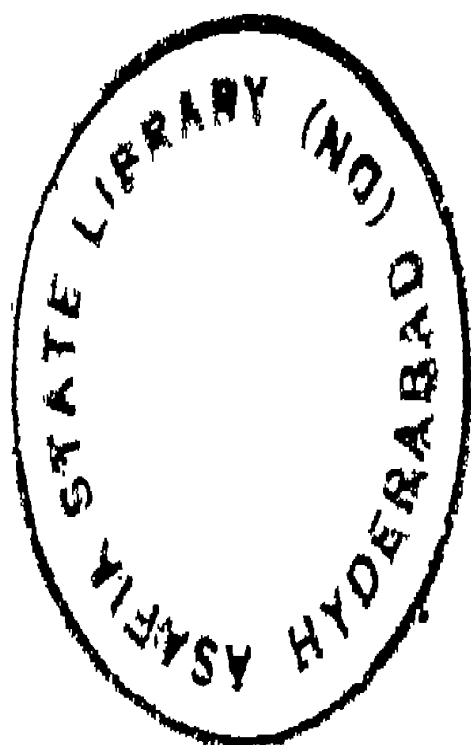


# SOUTH OF THE CONGO

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# SOUTH OF THE CONGO

by  
SELWYN JAMES

*With map and eight half-tone illustrations*



JOHN



LONG

Limited

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## IN BLACK AND WHITE

UNTIL 1937 AFRICA MERELY REPRESENTED TO ME A VAST CONTINENT jutting into the Indian and South Atlantic Oceans. I knew it as a land rich in resources and perplexed by a native problem which I thought of as an unending struggle between black and white. I had read of the exploits of Cecil Rhodes and the fabulous riches of the Rand. To my generation the Boer War belonged to another century and the Bantu to another world.

Like almost everyone else, I had studied the history of Southern Africa in school and college, but was only vaguely and distantly aware of its modern problems. My desire to know more about them was first whetted by a South African clergyman whom I met by chance in Russia. I travelled with him from Leningrad to England in 1937 on a Soviet boat. The trip was uneventful and the weather was bad. For long hours he talked to me about Southern Africa, sketching in its historical background against the modern scene and identifying conflicting groups and nationalities, dominant personalities and fierce prejudices. As a newspaperman I was fascinated by the stories he told. As a young Englishman growing up in a crazy world I was disgusted by his accounts of degrading poverty and ostentatious wealth. Most of all I was alarmed by his reports of spreading Nazi infiltration.

I had some money saved up and I had made no plans for the immediate future. Before that Soviet steamer arrived at London Docks I had decided to make Southern Africa my next port of call.

Overnight the whole world became acutely aware that all of Africa had become a crucial theatre of war and that the United Nations considered its defence imperative. The fall of Allied bastions in the Far East has widened the enemy's sphere of operations by thousands of miles, and the Japanese were in a position to menace the sandy beaches of Southern Africa.

Now, as in the days of the swashbuckling Portuguese mariners of the fifteenth century, the European sea power able to control South Africa's coastal regions holds the key to the Far East. The huge continent thrust into the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans is the gateway to the Orient.

When the Portuguese, in 1487, discovered the Cape of Good Hope at the continent's southern tip, they acclaimed it not so much a spring-board for a colonial movement into the hinterland, but solely for its strategical importance. It was a convenient half-way house. It offered a fine natural harbour in Table Bay; it was a source of fresh water and food with which the mariners could continue their voyage to the fabulous regions of the East. It also provided a military base from which the Portuguese could beat back rival sea powers seeking the same Oriental riches.

The Portuguese clung to the Cape for about 165 years, but when the Dutch ousted them Portugal's trade with the East dwindled to virtually nothing. And later still, when the British took over the Cape

of Good Hope from the Dutch, England's trade with the Orient and her conquests there became one of her prime concerns. The wisdom of controlling an alternative and shorter route to the Far East occurred to Britain's trade competitors. And when the idea of building the Suez Canal began to take shape Britain fought it tooth and nail. The Canal was formally opened in 1869 and the expense of its construction was shared internationally, with the French contributing the major share and the British holding entirely aloof. But as the Cape's importance tended to decrease, the British perceived the wisdom of jumping on the bandwagon and bought up a block of Suez Canal shares. Within a few years the astute British had established their influence sufficiently in the neighbouring territories to control both entrances of the Canal and therefore to deny its use to Britain's enemies in time of war.

Today, as I write this in 1943, the Suez Canal is a precarious route to the East. Only a few Allied convoys carrying men and equipment depend on this short-cut. The old sea route by way of Southern Africa has resumed its old importance. Moreover, the Cape of Good Hope not only commands the shipping lanes to the Far East and India, but also sits astride the oceanways to Russia, where the Red Army stands between the Nazis and the Japanese. Many of the multi-shipped convoys carrying military aid from the United States to the Soviet Union steam down Africa's West Coast, round the Cape of Good Hope and then up the East Coast to the port of Basra in the Persian Gulf. By rail and road the tanks and the planes and the guns are then rushed to the fighting fronts in the Leningrad, Moscow and Caucasus sectors.

The Portuguese of the fifteenth century found it necessary to occupy only one or two points on the coast of Africa in order to hold the key to the East. They were menaced by their European rivals from the sea only. But since those days Africa has been overrun by expanding imperialist powers. The nation that holds the Cape of Good Hope today must constantly be on the alert against possible enemies from Africa's interior. The gateway to the Far East, the shipping lanes to the armies fighting in Russia, can only be held so long as all Africa from the Belgian Congo to the Union of South Africa lies in friendly hands.

The Axis has sought to gain bases in this vast region since long before the outbreak of the Second World War. Berlin and Tokyo recognized its importance in global warfare from the moment their present totalitarian Governments sprang to power. Hitler wants to establish a colonial empire in Africa reaching far beyond the borders of pre-World-War-One Reich possessions. The Japanese have had their eye on Eastern Africa as a market for their cheap, mass-produced goods for years. The immediate Axis aim, however, is to cut Allied supply lines and establish bases for further aggression in the direction of the Western Hemisphere.

So far Southern Africa has thwarted every Axis attempt to gain a foothold. In the Union of South Africa, a self-governing British Dominion and the only sovereign state south of the Congo, Hitler was confident that he had found a corner of the British Empire which would align itself against the Mother Country. The Nazis believed that the South Africans of Dutch stock would keep the Union out of war. Hitler had carefully fostered the intense anti-British sentiment among these people, who outnumbered the English-speaking section of the Union's

population. South Africa was fine soil for the seeds of Nazism. But Hitler reckoned without General Jan Smuts, the Union's foremost statesman and now its war-time Prime Minister. Smuts piloted the Union through the greatest crisis of its history. By a narrow margin of votes in the Union Parliament he defeated the neutrality plea of his contemporary, General James Hertzog, who had been Prime Minister in the pre-war years and an admirer of the Nazi system.

But it is true that Hitler did not go entirely unrewarded for his efforts in South Africa. Its people are split on the war issue. Its Government is studded with traitors and saboteurs. The anti-British and pro-Fascist Boers have dangerously weakened the Union's war effort and have organized a military fifth column of Stormtroopers. They may yet start a civil war in South Africa and unseat the anti-Nazi General Smuts. These Boers want to steer South Africa to the crooked path of pro-Nazi neutrality. They want to expel the English-speaking peoples and establish their own Boer republic, to be run strictly along Fascist lines. I have known the Boers well and have talked to their leaders. They are intense nationalists, humourless and bitter. Such men are dangerous.

The Union of South Africa is not the Africa of story-books. It is a modern state with skyscraper cities. Native life is not colourful and pretty; it is squalid and stricken with disease. Lions do not roam with careless abandon through the dusty streets of South African villages; they were pushed north long ago by white civilization. What made South Africa modern and wealthy was the discovery of its gold deposits, the world's richest.

These goldmines lie only a few hours away by air from Lourenço Marques, where the Nazis are plotting and directing sabotage. Worse still, ever since the Japanese achieved dominance of the Indian Ocean these mines are within range of bombers operating from aircraft carriers. And if the Japanese had occupied Madagascar the mines by now would have been reduced to ruins.

The mines are owned largely by absentee British shareholders—one of the reasons why the Boers are permanently angry with the British. Gold is dug from the earth by black labourers who are paid an average of £5 per month. The Boers on their big farms refuse to pay their black labourers sums like that. They pay them even less. That is why they have difficulty in persuading the blacks to work on their farms.

South Africa's political life has been dominated by Boers. Because of them the blacks are forced to live under Hitler-like legislation. Their lot is far worse than the Negro's in the American South, where there are Constitutional guarantees, if only in theory. From what I have been able to observe of the South African Bantu native and the way he is oppressed, I can state flatly that Hitler himself could not do a worse job. The Boers themselves tacitly admit this when they refuse to permit the passage of legislation which would give the blacks military training and permit them to take up arms in defence of their country. General Smuts, a Boer himself, has been trying since the beginning of 1942 to get this legislation passed. He realizes that South Africa could be easily overwhelmed by a powerful enemy striking against its shores. The cream of South Africa's men are in Egypt. The Union's coastline,

extending from the borders of South-west Africa all the way round the Cape of Good Hope and up the East Coast to the Mozambique border, is only half-heartedly defended. Smuts realizes, too, the danger from the dissident Boers, who would give aid and comfort to the invaders. He wants to make sure of his country's defence by building a big army of Bantus. But even Smuts is aware that this in itself is not enough. He knows that he cannot expect the blacks to fight fanatically or even doggedly without the incentive of a substantial promise that after the war they would be released from the virtual fascism under which they live today. So far the blacks have been promised nothing.

In the former German colony of South-west Africa, now under a League of Nations mandate to the South African Union, Hitler has diligently built up a Nazi fifth column. Thousands of Germans have been permitted to take out British citizenship under the liberal mandate system. They were free men living in a democracy. But they did not choose to remain free. By 1936 most of them were rabid Nazis, storing smuggled arms against the day when they would revolt to restore the colony to the Fatherland. The entire mandate, set dangerously next door to the rich South African Union, rapidly became an outpost of the New Germany. Its men and youths belonged to Bunds and youth organizations, and received secret military training. Their *putsch*, planned for Hitler's birthday in 1939, did not come off. Police reinforcements from the Union of South Africa arrived one day before it was scheduled to start.

Many of these South-west African Nazis have been interned. But they are still in Africa. They are still waiting for the Axis invasion, still hoping to play their part. Of that I am sure; I saw them rehearsing before war broke out.

Far up on Africa's East Coast and into the wilder country is Tanganyika, formerly German East Africa. Here the Germans were also Nazis. They planned their *putsch* at the time of Munich. They too failed. Perhaps that is putting it too strongly; they were not even given the chance to succeed. British troops were rushed to the scene. The Nazis had not yet reached for their guns. Now most of them are whiling away the war years in prison camps. Tanganyika, ruled under a British mandate, was inherited by the British Empire, like South-west Africa, after World War One. It gave Britain what she had craved for years: a solid block of territory from the Cape to Cairo.

To the north of Tanganyika lies British Kenya; to the south, Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) and British Rhodesia; to the west of it is the Belgian Congo; and to the east is the Indian Ocean.

Tanganyika has nothing to fear from her neighbours. But the Indian Ocean may not be so very friendly, for the Japanese Navy needs Tanganyika for any attempt at invasion of Southern Africa. The territory lies athwart the vital Allied shipping lanes. It is ill-defended. Its white population numbers only a few thousand. From bases on Tanganyika the Japanese could strike at will at the Allied convoys on their way to Russia and Egypt. That is why the Japanese Navy has collected an enormous dossier of information about Tanganyika's defences. It was not only on commercial errands that the Japanese merchants and traders visited Tanganyika before the war. On orders from Tokyo they kept their eyes open for far more important things. Cameras clicked



frequently; plans were freely sketched; Japanese ears were alert for the sound of Englishmen talking.

With a Japanese fleet on the horizon, Tanganyika would have reason to wonder what she could expect from her Southern neighbours, the Portuguese in Mozambique. Their neutrality is only a confession of their inability to protect themselves. Portuguese East Africa might give in to the Japanese too easily. Tanganyika would also have her hands full with her interned Nazis, and she could expect little help from British Kenya, which would also be under threat of attack and anxious to keep its garrison at full strength. The Belgian Congo, where United States troops and Belgian forces are stationed, would probably send aid. How much it could spare would be another question. What Tanganyika's blacks would do if the Japanese attacked is also problematical. I found them to be less unhappy than many in Africa; but I wouldn't make any bets about their loyalty to the British Crown. I doubt whether the British Crown would either.

While Nazi activity in the two mandates—South-west Africa and Tanganyika—was to be expected in the pre-war years, there was little realization that the Germans had also made inroads into the Portuguese East African Colony. It was here that I came upon the headquarters in Southern Africa of the German Foreign Office and the Gestapo. The Reich consular offices were located in Lourenço Marques, Mozambique's capital. A Gestapo agent named Emile Hanke played Hitler's game in this key port. He stayed here after Germany went to war. His job became even more important than it was in peace-time. I believe he is still there.

Mozambique is neutral territory but it occupies a particularly strategic position. It lies on the coast, less than 300 miles from the island of Madagascar. The Allied convoys pass up the Mozambique Channel. The Nazis in Lourenço Marques find this noteworthy.

The Union of South Africa lies to the west of Mozambique. The Union of South Africa is at war with Germany—and the Nazis know that the Mozambique-Union border presents no problem to the secret agent and the saboteur. The Portuguese administration in Lourenço Marques pretends that its neutrality is pure. But the Nazis there are not in the least troubled; they are very, very busy these days.

The island of Madagascar was another little-known place until the news dispatches boosted its importance. The Nazis and the Japanese knew all about Madagascar many years before 1939. The Japanese first sent their agents there in 1927, and again in 1938, when I had the dubious pleasure of being introduced to some Japanese naval officers. The Germans sent "tourists" from Lourenço Marques in 1937 and 1938. They tried to build up a fifth column among the natives. The Governor of the island was a French Fascist named Leon Cayla. He made no attempt to thwart Nazi activities, and he welcomed the unofficial Japanese missions.

The Axis wanted Madagascar primarily as a base from which they could strike at Southern Africa and the Allied shipping lanes. But Hitler's long-range programme for the island was even more ignominious. The New Order provides that Madagascar shall become a dumping-ground for world Jewry—or, to put it more accurately, a death chamber.

The British occupation of Madagascar in 1942 did Hitler and the

Japanese out of their plans for it. But the island's fate is still not certain. The British must now hold it, build up its defences and protect every inch of its long, rambling coastline. It is a formidable task. The Japanese Navy is still capable of attempting to reverse the decision.

The Nazis have also sought to make the British protectorate of Bechuanaland friendly to Germany. Bechuanaland is situated directly to the north of the Union, while to the west of it lies South-west Africa. I met a German agent in this protectorate early in 1939. He was a naive fellow and quite unequal to the task of swinging the loyalty of the native chiefs away from the British Crown. But he kept trying as long as his money from Berlin lasted.

The other two protectorates in Southern Africa—Basutoland, which lies like an island squarely in the middle of the Union, and Swaziland to the east of it on the Mozambique border—were free of Nazi agents, so far as I could learn. But these territories had their own troubles. They were afraid not of Germany but of the Union of South Africa, which had been trying for years to "absorb" them in Sudetenland fashion. The native chiefs and the people of Basutoland and Swaziland were reasonably contented under the British flag. They had no desire to be "protected" under the Union's anti-native legislation.

There are three colonies south of the equator: Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and the Belgian Congo. Hitler kept his hands off them during the pre-war years. The two former are British colonies, rich in minerals and farming land. The whites who have settled there are tough British empire-builders. I never met people quite like them in any other part of Southern Africa.

The Belgian Congo can boast the best and most efficient native system, broadly speaking, in all Africa. Here I found the happiest blacks on the continent. They were well fed and healthy and usually adequately paid. Hitler's propaganda agents are consistently unsuccessful with happy people. But it must be understood that the Congo system is strictly disciplinarian; it offers little hope of *political* freedom for the blacks. The Congo is run by Big Business.

A glance at the map will show that the Congo is set in the middle of Africa, with a narrow corridor which gives it access to the Atlantic Ocean on the West Coast. Together with French Equatorial Africa—De Gaullist territory—it forms Southern Africa's first line of defence. The Congo has a mixed white and black army, which includes some troops from the United States.

These, then, are the territories with which this book is concerned. Only incidentally are they studied as geographical units; the major emphasis is on their strategical and political importance to the cause of the United Nations. Economically, too, the stakes for which the warring powers are gambling here are equally great because Africa is rich, probably the richest undeveloped continent in the world. So far, however, it has been largely neglected. Huge quantities of key materials lie unexploited. The whites in Southern Africa have scarcely begun to scratch the surface of its wealth. Diamonds, gold, iron, tin, copper, manganese, vanadium, asbestos—these are some of the minerals in Africa's earth. With the possible exception of gold, they are produced

in relatively small quantities. The Nazis lose no opportunity to describe how they intend to exploit Africa's resources to the limit if they ever lay hands on that continent.

My own generation has inherited many romantic misconceptions of the British Empire in Africa. Until I went to South Africa there was no way of dispelling my fallacies of distance and prejudice. On-the-scene observation and close association with blacks and whites revealed a drama of seething conflicts on the vast stage of the territory south of the Congo. What I saw and what I felt in that theatre of action are recorded in the following pages.

## II

### “MAYI BUYE IRFRIKA!”

ASK A SOUTH AFRICAN BLACK WHAT HE WOULD LIKE MOST, AND HE WILL probably answer: “Mayi Buye Ifrika”—“Give us back our land”. This is not the slogan of a political group; nobody seems to know just how or when it originated. But through the years “Mayi Buye Ifrika” has become a *national* slogan. I heard it whispered and shouted from Cape Town to Johannesburg, and from Johannesburg to the borders of the Belgian Congo.

The natives of Southern Africa have fought a losing battle for their land against the white man since the fifteenth century. The settlers from Europe looked at it this way: The blacks were inferior people, both mentally and physically. They could not be permitted to arrest the spread of white civilization. Moreover, they were primitive agriculturists under the influence of witch doctors. They would settle for a few years in one place and then move on when the soil became tired and unproductive. They knew little or nothing about the principle of crop rotation. The white man felt he had every right to push the Bantu off his land and to develop farms under relatively advanced agricultural principles.

There was something to be said for this view. There was land enough for everybody in Southern Africa, so long as it was cultivated properly. There seemed to be no good reason why the Bantus should occupy vast areas of fertile soil, or why the white settlers should be forced to stand by and watch them abuse it. But the whites were impatient, ruthless and greedy; they missed every opportunity to gain the confidence of the natives. They cheated and slaughtered their way to supremacy. More than anything, it was the slave tradition of the Dutch Boers (farmers) which ruined the chances for a black-white relationship based on trust and mutual co-operation.

Some of the tribes of Southern Africa, however, were warlike and no doubt impossible to deal with amicably. Quite a few of the tribal chiefs were tyrants, preying on the lands of weaker tribes, always plundering and killing. It would be foolish to suggest that Africa was a land of peace and plenty before the white man appeared. Africa, as we shall see, certainly bred its black Hitlers.

The Portuguese were the first white men in modern history to meet the Africans in the southern reaches of the continent. When Bartholomew Diaz' ships were blown towards the shore in the region of the Cape of Good Hope in 1487 they were met by Hottentot tribesmen. The Hottentots were yellow-skinned little herdsmen, proud of their large flocks of cattle. They were not a friendly people and kept their distance when Diaz stepped ashore. After a few days they grew more inquisitive, coming down to the beach to find Diaz filling tanks from a fresh-water hole. Not unnaturally, they considered Diaz a trespasser; they threw stones at him until he killed one of them with an arrow.

Diaz sailed back to Portugal a few weeks later. His great discovery was followed up by Vasco da Gama, who, in 1497, landed at the same spot in Southern Africa. The Portuguese did not begin to settle in Africa until many years later. They were interested in Table Bay's natural harbour and its convenience as a stopping-place on their way to India and the Far East. They made no attempt to befriend the Hottentots; they raided their kraals in the coastal regions, stealing food and water and carrying off a few slaves.

The Hottentots were properly infuriated, and in 1510 they sought to banish the Portuguese from their strongholds once and for all. The small Portuguese garrison was attacked one night by Hottentot warriors. The soldiers were put to flight and their leader, Captain Francisco D'Almeida, was slain.

Any inclination the Portuguese might have had to push inland was killed there and then. But somehow they still managed to hold on to the Cape. It was not until the Dutch mariners, who were also competing for the Orient's trade, pushed the Portuguese out in 1652 that the white colonization of South Africa began.

Johann van Riebeck was the Cape of Good Hope's first Governor. He was an official of the Dutch East India Company. His job was to develop the Cape as a small coastal colony devoted to the raising of citrus fruits and vegetables for the scurvy-ridden crews of the Company's vessels. He brought with him 100 men and five women.

Van Riebeck, aware of the experiences of the Portuguese with the natives, was determined not to incur the hostility of the Hottentots. It was not necessary for him to push more than a few miles inland because his Company's interests were exclusively confined to developing the Cape coastal region. He even persuaded a Hottentot leader, a wizened old man whom the Dutch Boers called Harry, to become his interpreter. He refused to permit his Dutch followers to take Hottentot lands, even though they were continually pressing him to give the word.

But the Boers did not have to wait long before fate handed them an excuse. A young white boy shepherding cattle on the slopes of Table Mountain was murdered one Sunday afternoon by a band of Hottentots, led by, of all people, Harry. The Boers, openly outraged but secretly rather pleased, resolved then and there to invade Hottentot lands. Van Riebeck could do nothing to stop them. There was no doubt that the Boers had ample reason to demand reprisals, but they used the incident as the signal for protracted warfare against the natives. The Boers, deeply religious people, were particularly displeased because the murder had taken place on a Sunday and had interrupted church services.

Incidentally, the Hottentot murderers had made off with the Boers' cattle.

No history books in South Africa explain why the Hottentots should suddenly have precipitated open warfare during a period in which their relations with the Boers were relatively friendly. The Hottentots, of course, didn't exactly welcome the white men to Africa, but the murder of one white lad was probably inspired by individual members of the tribe. The Dutch garrison was not yet strong enough to embark upon a very ambitious campaign of territorial expansion. But after some years the Boers felt themselves powerful enough to order Hottentot cattle-raisers off the slopes of Table Mountain, where, during the summer months, they traditionally brought their cattle to graze.

The First Hottentot War was the direct result. It was a short, bloody war which left the Hottentots with a healthy respect for the white man's firearms. They were pushed out of the Table Mountain region altogether, leaving the Boers to extend their sphere of influence and their farms, which were developing fruitfully. But the Hottentots braved the white men's bullets and made furious counter-attacks. After five years of continual warfare the Boers began to realize that African natives were no push-over. The Dutch Government tried another tack. It ordered the Boers to negotiate for the purchase of Hottentot lands in the Cape region with the honest intention of making no further expeditions into the interior. The Dutch wanted peace with the Hottentots primarily because they saw the spectre of a British challenge to their occupation of the Cape. In short, they wanted to avoid a two-front war.

The Boers, however, stored up trouble for themselves when they tried to "buy" the Hottentot lands. They did the job cheaply and dishonestly. They persuaded a few corrupt Hottentot chiefs to hand over their lands for a handful of valueless trinkets. The chiefs were thus violating the tribal system of communal ownerships. Most of them were disowned by their tribes, which promptly joined with chiefs who refused to be bribed. In 1657 the Boers gave up the idea of "peaceful expansion". One reason was because they found that bribery did not work in the long run; another was because their farms, constantly multiplying, needed workers. There was no reason to import white farm labourers when a few raids would net them several hundred black slaves.

Hence the Boers decided that armed force, after all, was the only effective method of maintaining power. They launched widespread attacks, killed thousands of Hottentots, and occupied their lands. Thousands of others were rounded up as slaves. It appeared that Van Riebeck had given way to his followers' urge to expand. In 1657 he imported slaves from West Africa, East Africa and Madagascar. Additionally, hundreds of coolies were shipped from Java. The slave trade flourished in South Africa for more than 150 years. The children of slaves were also slaves, so that the whites were assured of a never-ending supply. The Boers, fearful that slaves might refuse to bear children, ran farms on which Hottentot women were forced to breed with Javanese, Indians and Bantus from West Africa. Bonuses were paid to the men. By 1806 there were over 30,000 coloured slaves in the Cape district, while the European population was 26,000.

The advance of the white colonizers into Southern Africa's inner

regions began in earnest during the latter part of the eighteenth century. It was then that they came up against the masses of Bantu people who were to form such an obstacle to their progress. Unlike the Hottentots, the Bantus originated in Central Africa, from where one thousand years ago they started to push south. The early battles between Boer and Bantu were fought mainly in the area of the Fish River, which at its mouth is approximately 400 miles up the East Coast from Cape Town.

For some years the Fish River was recognized as a natural barrier between the natives and the white invaders. A treaty to that effect was signed in 1778 between Bantu chiefs and the Boers. But there was no basis of mutual trust in it. The Fish River was anything but an effective barrier, because its bed is dry most of the year; and neither the Boers nor the natives were precise in their definitions, because the former were awaiting a suitable occasion for further advances—and the latter knew it.

Several Bantu tribes were living west of the Fish River, the area under Boer control, before the treaty was signed; and no provision was made for them under the terms of the treaty. They may have constituted a kind of Bantu fifth column ready to inform their chiefs of any Boer preparations for offensives across the river. In any event, the Boers some years later attacked their kraals and drove them across to the east bank. And when the Xosa tribe of the Bantu nation living east of the Fish River made quite natural reprisals on Boers who had unexplainably settled east of the Fish River, the first "Kaffir War" broke out.

The Xosas were routed—"expelled" as some South African historians carefully express themselves—and the Boers confiscated their cattle by way of "compensation for their sufferings". The Boers scrapped the 1778 treaty. A general advance was made west of the Fish River, where the Boers developed farms and established permanent settlements.

But the country was so vast and the settlements so scattered that the indomitable Xosas gradually infiltrated back to their former lands. That started the second Kaffir War, fought mainly in areas west of the Fish River. The Dutch Government of the Cape began to realize that the Boers were spending more time at destructive warfare than profitable colonization; it decided to make peace with the Xosas, allowing them to remain in their old homes "without prejudice to the ownership of Europeans".

This, of course, was no basis for permanent peace, and it was never intended to be. In those early days the Dutch Government took a strictly neutral view of the Boers' ambitions because it was still interested only in maintaining coastal garrisons. It was realized, however, that if the Boers started a war they could not finish, Dutch troops would be forced to go to the rescue. The keystone of the Government's policy was therefore to keep the peace, even if it involved appeasing the Xosas.

But five years later hostilities started once again. And this time the Government impatiently announced that the outbreak was the fault of the Boers. What had happened was that the Boers had made life as uncomfortable as possible for the Xosas who had been allowed to reoccupy their old lands. Xosa families were continually pushed off territories the Boers claimed belonged to them. General Sluysken, Governor of the Cape, issued a proclamation in 1793, forbidding all contact between



[South African Railways.]

CAPE TOWN, WITH TABLE MOUNTAIN IN THE BACKGROUND.



PANORAMIC VIEW OF JOHANNESBURG, GOLD-MINING CENTRE OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

[*South African Railway*]



Xosas and Boers beyond the Baviaans River, a tributary of the Fish River and slightly east of it.

But no such scrap of paper disheartened the Boers. Xosa settlements were attacked and occupied even after the proclamation. By this time the Xosa chiefs were firmly convinced that the white man's word was not to be trusted. They kept their armies in a constant state of mobilization, feeling they had no obligation to keep off Boer lands. The result was that Xosa warriors made frequent raids on the farms of frontier Boers, forcing them in some districts to abandon their lands and retreat. The Xosas were soon in a position once again to penetrate areas *west* of the Fish River. Another nine years passed, and still the Xosas were repelling all Boer attempts to thrust their way into Southern Africa's hinterland.

In the meantime the British had occupied the Cape of Good Hope. Holland had been invaded by the French, who were also at war with Britain. The Dutch consented to the British occupation in 1795 to save the Cape from falling into France's hands.

The British Cape administration found that the defence of the Cape was not all it had to worry about. It began to fear the pressure of the Boers clamouring for more land, and decided to open a wide-scale offensive designed to clear the way for an uninterrupted advance of the Europeans. The British dispatched an army to break up the Xosa tribe. It succeeded in driving the Xosas across the sandy bed of the Fish River for the umpteenth time. Four years of comparative peace followed, but this interval proved to be only a lull between wars.

The British and Boers had forced the Xosas into the arms of another Bantu tribe, the Gaikas. And the Gaikas, bitter rivals of the Xosas, refused to make room on their lands for 20,000 Xosa refugees. The rivalry was so deep-rooted that the two tribes apparently could not bring themselves to unite in face of the common enemy. The Gaika chiefs actually came to some vague agreement with the Boers and gradually pushed the Xosas back into no-man's land. For some time the Xosas lived in this buffer territory, fighting both Boers and Gaikas. The Boer plan was clearly to induce war between the two tribes so that they would eventually annihilate one another. When they felt that both sides had been sufficiently weakened by years of sporadic warfare, the Boers swept forward to take over the Gaika lands as well.

In 1814 the British formally took over the Cape from the Dutch. The Boers were still in an expansive mood but not at all sure of the basic attitude of their new rulers towards a further push into lands occupied by hostile native peoples. Slowly it became apparent that Briton and Boer were at odds over fundamental policy in Africa. The crux of their differences concerned the treatment of natives. Black slavery was becoming a widely discussed topic, even in the most sedate English drawing-rooms. Earnest attempts by nineteenth-century Liberals were made to persuade the British Government to abolish slavery. And in South Africa itself the Hottentots and Bantus revolted whenever they saw a chance. One of the first slave uprisings was led by an Irishman named Hooper, a kind of South African John Brown. He was a tough, hard-hitting man, intensely religious and particularly contemptuous of the Boers. He believed that men who lived off the

sweat of other men deserved to be punished. He was purely an idealist, anxious to bring freedom to the African natives. He planned with Hottentot leaders to release hundreds of slaves at the little settlement of Malmesbury in the Cape Colony. But their plans misfired. Drove of escaped slaves were massacred by Boer gunmen. Hooper was caught and thrown into gaol; the local Boer population demanded that he be handed over to them so that they could make a lasting example of a white man who dared to challenge the profitable slave system. Hooper is said to have spat and yelled insults at the crowd from the window of his cell. When he was brought to trial he quickly turned the court-room into a pulpit, earnestly demanding that the Boers give up their evil traditions. But Boer justice was swift and terrible. An infuriated Boer jury found him guilty in less than a minute, and an equally infuriated Boer judge sentenced him to death without even asking God to have mercy on his soul. Hooper was immediately dragged into the public square, and there he was hanged before a crowd of several hundred settlers.

In 1825 a band of Hottentot warriors, encouraged by rumours that Britain was soon to wipe out slavery, attacked a slave market in the town of Worcester, also in the Cape Colony. They released the slaves, cut down the white slave-traders and then fled into the surrounding hills. For several days they held off a commando of hastily recruited Boers until they were encircled and forced to surrender. The ring-leaders were caught and put to death on the spot; their heads were cut off and exposed on poles set up in Worcester's main street for all Hottentots to see. Others were tortured and whipped publicly, and those who did not succumb were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from five to twenty years.

Whatever the motive, Britain frowned more and more on the Boer tradition of slavery. Some British industrialists and merchants feared the repercussions on world economy if South Africa were permitted to be exploited under slave labour. Until the Boers mended their ways, the British were determined not to give their official blessing to any further expansion into Bantu territories.

But the purposeful Boers paid no attention to British warnings. They pressed forward, taking the law into their own hands and fighting several unofficial wars with the Bantus. The natives, who firmly believed that the day would come when they would recapture all their former lands, did not give the Boers any peace either. They were aware that the British were not supporting the Boers, and this gave them hope that their enemies would finally be defeated. In 1834 the British passed the Anti-Slavery Law in South Africa, compelling the Boers to give up their slaves. The Bantu tribes were properly impressed, and on Christmas Day of the same year they launched fierce attacks on the frontier Boers. They made a job of it; 15,000 of them set fire to 456 Boer farmhouses and made off with about 250,000 head of cattle.

But the Bantus had miscalculated Boer strength. The raid was just what the Boers wanted as an excuse to start another advance. And the British, of course, were forced to send aid because of the treacherous circumstances under which the war had started. But the British Government still felt that hostilities were basically the fault of the whites and

that the native raid was merely the culminating factor of a war that had been brewing for years.

The Boers, supported by British troops, attacked efficiently and swiftly. Just as they were congratulating themselves on a great victory, and were preparing to carve up among themselves a huge tract of captured land, they received a message from the British Colonial Secretary, Lord Glenelg. His Lordship did not mince words. In a stinging denunciation of the war, he said:

“Through a long series of years the Kaffirs had an ample justification for war; they had to resent, and endeavoured justly, though impotently, to avenge a series of encroachments. They had a perfect right to hazard the experiment, however hopelessly, of extorting by force that redress which they could not otherwise obtain; and the original justice is on the side of the conquered and not of the victorious party.”

That was the last straw. The Boers, angry at the Anti-Slavery Act and bitterly disappointed with Lord Glenelg's statement, decided to have no more business with the British.

In 1836 the Great Trek began. Hundreds of Boer families started to move in their stout covered wagons into the unknown country—territories inhabited by war-like Bantu tribes. They took with them a great resentment of the British. Fundamentally, the Great Trek was a protest against the British emancipation of the slaves. The British liberal policy of granting rights to persons with coloured skins made their lives under British rule intolerable. In later years the Great Trek was to become more than a protest; it was to become a *rebellion* against the British Administration, and the foundation stone of the Anglo-Boer racialism of the twentieth century.

By 1838 the Voortrekkers had reached the Drakensberg Mountains on the Natal border. Their progress had been beset by fever and the opposition of scattered native tribes. But here in Natal they were to find their greatest enemy—the Zulus. The Zulus were the Romans of Africa. They had fought and subdued the other tribes of Southern Africa. They were fanatical warriors who had never known defeat. And they were determined to defend their lands against the Boers.

Long before the arrival of the Voortrekkers, Zulu armies had been maintained under the ferocious discipline of a black Hitler. He was King Tshaka. Born in 1783, he was the son of an obscure tribal chief, but under his leadership the Zulu tribes were welded into a nation, trained and drilled into a great invincible army. Tshaka's ambition was to become King of all the Africans below the Limpopo River. Between 1812 and 1828 he was estimated to have killed more than 1,000,000 of his countrymen. His method was to wipe out rival or weaker tribes completely. During his life he blighted the earth for thousands of square miles.

Tshaka's military discipline was stricter than any white man's. He once tested the loyalty of a group of his warriors by ordering them to charge to their death over a cliff. Some of his finest warriors, anxious to prove their blind allegiance, joined the doomed band. But Tshaka was no fool. He left no margin for error. Just in case the warriors should hesitate as they ran, shrieking their war-cries, to the edge of the cliff, Tshaka had placed several regiments of his crack troops ready to drive them over at the points of their spears.

A small group of British traders who had founded Port Natal (now Durban) were the first white men to meet Tshaka. In 1824 he granted minor concessions to the Britons, not so much because he feared a white invading army but because he took a liking to a burly, genial Irish trader named Henry Fynn. Tshaka's warriors nicknamed Fynn the "Sea Monster" because of a shaggy crop of hair and huge frame. When Fynn took his rifle and killed an animal at some distance, Tshaka was his friend for life.

Like all tyrants, Tshaka was surrounded by rivals. As he grew older his power began to slip. His half-brother, a massive Zulu whose name was Dingaan, plotted against him. His chance to grab power came when Tshaka's wrinkled old mother died. Tshaka ordered his tribe to go into mourning; all those who did not weep for days on end were executed on the spot by his bodyguard. Dingaan and his fellow conspirators crept into the royal kraal in the dead of night and murdered Tshaka in his bed.

Dingaan immediately took command, declaring himself the new Zulu Chieftain. But he was no reformist; his regime was, if possible, even more tyrannical than his predecessor's. He celebrated his rise to power by executing scores of disloyal troops. Discipline in the Zulu armies became more severe; in battle he ordered the advancing Zulus to throw themselves on their opponents' spears so that his rear forces could drive a wedge into the ranks of the enemy.

The Boer trekkers had heard of Dingaan, and many of them naturally feared the prospect of coming to grips with his armies. But there was one among them, a tough and dauntless pioneer named Piet Retief, who led a procession of Boer ox-wagons into Dingaan's valleys, where he hoped to secure the chief's permission to settle and form an independent republic. Retief's first meeting with Dingaan in October, 1837, made it abundantly obvious that the Zulus had no intention of granting concessions. Dingaan was a tyrant, to be sure, but he was quite justified in having no trust in the Boers' appeal for concessions. He was vain. He had lavishly decorated the interior of his kraal with pillars of glittering beads. But he was not a man to be cheated out of land by the treaties of Boers and a trunkful of trinkets.

The Boers had ruined their chances of gaining land peaceably in Natal by their dealings with the Xosas in the Fish River territory. Dingaan believed—and had every reason to believe—that he was up against treachery as bad as his own. He knew that he would be deposed, his people reduced to slavery, his warriors disarmed, if he let the Boers get the better of him. He knew it because the news of Boer colonial methods had spread far and wide. Every tribal chief in Southern Africa feared the white man more than his black rivals.

Dingaan told Piet Retief that if he would recapture 900 head of cattle stolen from him by Chief Sikonyella's rival tribe across the mountains it would provide a friendly basis for negotiations. Piet Retief, with incredible naïveté, appeared to believe that the return of Dingaan's cattle would buy a huge concession for Boer settlement. History records no doubt in Retief's mind as he went off in search of the cattle. Most of his followers were quite aware that Dingaan was a difficult customer, unlikely to yield a square inch of territory without a bloody fight. After all, the Zulu armies existed to protect what was Dingaan's. And yet the Boers

expected a treaty to be concluded amicably—no battles, no harsh words—and a treaty, moreover, under which a tyrant would give up much of his land.

Five months later, in February, 1838, Retief returned to Dingaan's kraal driving before him the 900 head of cattle. He brought with him seventy followers, an English interpreter, and thirty Hottentot attendants. Other Boer leaders had warned Retief that he was acting foolishly. It was very clear that Dingaan was in no mood to give away his lands. He had been profoundly disturbed by the coming of the white men. He had already been persuaded by the British at Port Natal to cede the southern part of Natal. More than anything else, he was nervous of the white men's firearms.

The British at Port Natal tried to stop Retief's dealings with Dingaan, but to no avail. After turning over the cattle, Dingaan signed a treaty by which the trekkers were ceded the whole of Natal. *The whole of Natal!*

Boer histories describe how Dingaan then gave a dance in honour of his guests, and how, at a given moment, Dingaan ordered Retief and his men seized and bound. Retief and his followers were then killed, their skulls cracked by knobkerries.

Dingaan immediately sent an army of 10,000 to make a clean sweep of the Boers in his valleys, where they were waiting for the return of Piet Retief, expecting him to show up with the treaty. Dingaan's army attacked the Boer encampment in the valley of Weenen—"the place of weeping"—where they slaughtered hundreds of Boer men, women and children. After a hard fight the Zulus retreated, when several of their leaders had been killed.

Despite the protests of the British, the Boers gathered new forces and under another Boer leader, Andries Pretorius, met the Zulus on December 16, 1838, in the Battle of Blood River. Dingaan's forces were decisively defeated, and the chief himself was driven into exile in Swaziland, where he was afterwards murdered.

Pretorius forced Chief Panda—Dingaan's brother and successor—to sign a new treaty with the trekkers, recognizing Boer claims in Natal. The Boers settled in Natal, promising the British that they would not return to the old slavery system. But these promises were broken.

Through Natal, and in the Orange Free State, the Boers pounced on surprised natives in their kraals and carried them off to work as slaves on their farms. The Zulus had been defeated in the field. There was nothing to fear. Old missionary reports show how the Boers contemptuously repudiated their promises to the British. One such report, written soon after Pretorius had become first President of the Natal Republic, said: "It is a well-known fact that in the late raid on Capai, the Boers carried off fifty children, and some of these were seen by Mr. — in families by whom they had been purchased. Pretorius made a proclamation of severe penalties for the practice . . . and the Boers laughed at the proclamation as meant to gull the English, and never intended to apply among the emigrants themselves."

These were the beginnings of the fight for Africa. Later, the British joined in the scramble as heartily as the Boers did, but with a measure of concern for the natives. All through the nineteenth century the Bantu

tribes fought to defend their lands, but they always retreated before the white men's arms. And when the organized resistance of the Bantus on the battlefield was dissipated, they fought on in disorganized, scattered groups.

### III

#### THE BOERS

FOR MANY YEARS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT STEADFASTLY REFUSED TO consider independence for the Boers who had penetrated into the unexplored regions of the North. But at the same time London did not dare to arrest their efforts to break the military power of the Bantu tribes and to build their own homes outside the jurisdiction of British law. The Boers were simply "emigrant farmers, subjects of Her Majesty, who had made unlawful incursions into the territories of the natives".

Meanwhile, the taxpayers of England were growing tired of accounts of continued bickering between Boer and Briton; they saw no good reason why the Boers should not govern themselves so long as they recognized the anti-slavery laws. So at last in 1852 and 1854 the British granted semi-independent status to the Boers, permitting them to establish the republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. But Britain retained the rights of the "Paramount Power" in South Africa, giving her the right to intervene in the affairs of the Boer republics if the interests of South Africa as a whole should seem threatened.

The maritime colony of Natal became a British possession, and the Boers who had established themselves there moved north into the Orange Free State. The British administration's headquarters remained in the Cape Colony. For a few years everything went well. But when the diamond fields of Kimberley were discovered, territorial disputes with the Boer republics followed. The British decided that, after all, their policy of non-intervention had not worked. Attempts were made to re-unite the Boer territories with the British colonies. The Boers stood firm, refusing to listen to pleas for a federated states of South Africa. The British Government's patience was exhausted, and British forces in 1877 struck into the Transvaal Republic, reducing its inhabitants once more to the status of "subjects of Her Majesty". But three years later the Transvaal Boers revolted and, in a brilliant and short campaign, compelled the British to withdraw.

The Boers finally lost their independence as a result of their defeat in the war with the British in 1899-1902. And this conflict was certainly no "people's war", so far as the English were concerned. It was a war, if ever there was one, for "special interests"—in this case, for the Transvaal gold-fields. Gold was discovered in the Transvaal in 1886, starting a rush of prospectors and financiers from the British Cape Colony.

Paul Kruger—"Oom Paul" to his people—was President of the Transvaal Republic at the time. He had a deep distrust of the British. As a boy of ten he had taken part in the Great Trek from the Cape to the Transvaal forty years previously. He had established his republic as an independent state, hoping to keep it free from British domination, the

very factor which had inspired his people to quit the Cape Colony. Kruger was deeply loved by his people. He was a Bible-reader, a strong and resolute type of the kind that produced "rugged individualism". He was essentially a democrat, with no pretensions and thoroughly contemptuous of the aristocracy. The story is told that he was once introduced to a British peer. Kruger, in his tall silk hat and puffing at his "churchwarden" pipe, apparently was quite unimpressed, chatting away in friendly terms with his visitor but not once addressing him as "your lordship". A shocked aide of the peer took Kruger aside and gave him details of his exalted position in English life, his family tree and the great respect accorded to him by the English people. Kruger listened intently for a while, nodding his head vigorously. Then he interrupted the aide and said: "Tell the gentleman that I myself was a cowherd and that my father was a farmer."

Born in 1825 in the Cape Colony, Kruger was always a man of action. He was only fourteen when he shot his first lion. He fired at attacking Zulus from behind the stout wheels of the Boer ox-wagons during the Great Trek. He amputated his own thumb with a hunting-knife when he injured it on a trek into the brush.

Kruger was all for religious tolerance, though he was ignorant of all religions but his own. He once opened a synagogue in Johannesburg, giving the local Jewry the shock of their lives when he shouted: "I declare this synagogue open in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!"

Kruger liked to play practical jokes on his colleagues in the Government. He put pins on their chairs. He would pass through the corridors of the Government buildings in Pretoria, playfully digging his acquaintances in the ribs with his stick. On one occasion he emerged from his office with a piece of wood in his hand and, skipping down the corridor, gave a perfect stranger a sharp rap over the head with it. "Who's that?" asked the stranger, rubbing his head. "That," he was informed, "is the President."

The greatest single enemy of Kruger's Transvaal Republic was the impetuous Cecil John Rhodes, Prime Minister of the British Cape Colony. Rhodes was a mixture of ruthless fortune-hunter and empire-builder. His great political idea was to unite the Boers and British into a homogeneous South African people; his great financial idea was to grab a large personal share of the Transvaal gold output. He had already made a huge fortune on the Kimberley diamond mines. He was now one of the first prospectors to invade Kruger's Republic.

Kruger could do nothing to halt the influx of British, Germans, Frenchmen and Cape Dutch. They overran the Transvaal, buying up land from Boer farmers at high prices and generally disrupting the beginnings of the agricultural economy Kruger had been trying to establish for his people. Within a very short time there were 80,000 invaders, outnumbering the Boers in the Republic by four to one. Kruger steadfastly refused to grant the foreigners, or "Uitlanders" as they were called, political rights. The Uitlanders were mostly Englishmen, and Kruger knew too well that to give them a franchise would be signing the death warrant of the Transvaal Republic. He sought therefore to oust them by making life as uncomfortable as possible for them. Dynamite was essential to the operation of the Uitlander-owned mines. He handed out

monopolies in dynamite indiscriminately to people who were sworn to support the Republic. In 1895 he attempted to ruin the British-run Cape-Transvaal Railroad by imposing prohibitive duties on all goods trucked on the last few miles from the Transvaal border to the gold-mining districts. This railroad was competing with another that he had built from the Transvaal to Delagoa Bay in Portuguese East Africa. Rhodes asked the British Government for support in his protests to Kruger. And when London promised to back Rhodes, even if it entailed the use of force, Kruger gave in.

Rhodes, however, was disappointed. He had hoped that Kruger would hold firm, thus giving Rhodes the excuse to march into the Transvaal and finish off the little republic that was so defiantly trying to resist the invasion of the Uitlanders. The next best thing was for Rhodes to organize an armed rebellion of the Uitlanders in the middle of which Rhodes would send in British troops to "restore law and order".

How this plan misfired is one of the better-known incidents of contemporary world history. Rhodes and his good friend Dr. Starr Jameson decided that Kruger was playing a pretty shrewd game. He refused to be provoked; he interfered with the Uitlanders' activities without actually violating existing agreements between the Republic and the British; or when he did overstep the mark, he discreetly backed down a moment later; and he refused, as was his right, to sign any further agreements with the British.

There was only one way of dealing with a man like Kruger—and that was by brute force, a method in which Rhodes and Jameson were well versed. Jameson at the time was the administrator of Rhodesia, then the private property of Rhodes' ambitious Chartered Company. On the Rhodesian-Transvaal frontier there was, unfortunately, no convenient jumping-off place for an invasion of the Transvaal that would bring the invaders rapidly to an important centre of Boer resistance. Rhodes therefore persuaded the British Government to grant to his Chartered Company a strip of land in Bechuanaland, then under British control. Rhodes explained that the land was needed to build a railroad from his diamond mines in Kimberley to his wide interests in Rhodesia. Rhodes lied. He needed it as a starting-place for the Jameson Raid that was to take place on December 29, 1895—and there were some in the British Colonial Office in London who knew very well that he wanted it for this reason.

The Jameson Raid failed hopelessly. Five hundred Chartered Company troops and volunteers crossed the border, expecting their action to coincide with an armed uprising of the Uitlanders in Johannesburg. But the Uitlanders bungled the job. A few of them fired pistol-shots into the air. The rest, because of bad organization, stayed at home. Jameson was met not by crowds of welcoming Uitlanders but by a determined commando of Boers, to whom he promptly surrendered.

Back in England there was no sympathy for Jameson and even less for Rhodes. The two of them had tried to precipitate a war which would have served their own selfish interests and those of the Uitlanders. The English people who would have had to pay for the war very properly did not feel that Rhodes' personal financial affairs concerned them. Rhodes was forced to resign the premiership of the Cape Colony, and both the British and Cape Parliaments reprimanded him for the Jameson Raid.



The British Government's part in the whole affair was somewhat obscure. *Officially*, they had known nothing of Rhodes' plans. It has been suggested, however, that *unofficially* Rhodes was given the green light on the strict understanding that if his scheme flopped the British Government was not only *not* to be implicated but would also deplore Rhodes' action in order to keep up appearances. But no published evidence has ever supported this theory—and so it remains a theory.

After the raid the Uitlanders kept right on agitating for a franchise in the Transvaal Republic. And Kruger kept right on refusing. In 1899 21,000 British subjects sent a petition to Queen Victoria, asking her to use her good offices with President Kruger. The British Government suggested a British-Boer conference. Lord Milner, Governor of the Cape Colony, talked matters over with Kruger. Milner insisted that Uitlanders be given the franchise. Meanwhile Kruger noticed that British troops were arriving in South Africa in considerable numbers. In October, 1899, Kruger sent an ultimatum to the British, demanding that all British troops be withdrawn from South Africa. The ultimatum was never answered, and the Anglo-Boer War broke out forty-eight hours later. In the first months of the war the Dutch in the Cape Colony remained loyal to the British, but later even they joined the Boers, aiding enemy raiding parties as they slashed into British troop columns.

The Afrikaaner today looks back on the Boer War as one of the greatest wrongs ever committed by the British Empire. And even in England there had been an uneasy feeling that justice had not been entirely on Britain's side.

Eight years after the war the Cape Colony, Natal, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal became the Union of South Africa, with equal rights for Boer and Briton. It was hoped that this concession would wipe out traditional Boer resentment for the British and would eliminate racial struggles. But all attempts so far to weld the two peoples into a South African nationality have failed miserably. As one observer remarked in 1910: "The Dutch now feel more Dutch, the British more British—and both feel less South African."

The Afrikaaners are still a fiercely conservative and pathologically nationalistic people. They would still prefer a free republic outside the British Commonwealth. Some of them are Fascists who think they can win it by agitation and sabotage in the midst of a global war. Others are sourly convinced that they cannot get it at all because of British military strength and British financial entrenchment in South Africa. Still another group believes that the Nazis must be defeated if the Afrikaaners are to preserve even their present status. But all but a tiny minority would like a free republic.

*Die Transvaler*, a Johannesburg newspaper and the most nationalistic Afrikaaner organ in the Union, has published a rough description of the proposed free republic. The Afrikaaner Fascists want to see it applied now.

*Die Transvaler* said: "It will be a republic in which there will be no place for British public institutions. These things, which are foreign to the spirit and wishes of the Afrikaaner, will be annihilated to the very foundations. It will be a republic with a government that is not subject to all sorts of foreign influences. Gen. Smuts' views, according to which the small Afrikaans culture must be dissolved in the great English culture

and South Africa be part of the great British Empire, will find no place in this Afrikaans republic. Mr. Hofmeyr's [War Cabinet Minister] negrophilism and liberalism, which would wipe out all colour bars and make the Afrikaaner a backboneless being, will have no place in this republic. Col. Stallard's [leader of a former pro-British party] imperialism, which would make South Africa subordinate in all respects to British interests, will have no place in this republic. Mr. Maddeley's [former Labour Party leader] Socialism and conceptions of the Afrikaaner people will have no place. The spirit of a people who are too afraid to speak about a republic will also find no entry into this republic. In economic policy it will be no milch-cow of Britain. It will be a republic in which the Chamber of Mines will have no authority."

However violent this programme may seem, it unquestionably represents the hopes and wishes of nationalist Afrikaanedom. It is in fact a programme to which all but a few Afrikaaners will subscribe. There is no paradox in the fact that thousands of Afrikaaners are supporting the war against Nazism, that thousands of Afrikaaner young men have fought and died on the North African battlefields. They properly agree that there can be no Afrikaaner republic until victory is won. They believe that they are fighting a battle of self-defence in which all their hopes for a republic will fade if the Nazis are victorious. They have temporarily swallowed their anti-British prejudices for what they believe to be the greater good of their country. While they criticize *Die Transvaler's* editorial, they criticize it only for its untimeliness.

In varying degrees the vast majority of Afrikaaners resent the British. Two generations of them have been urged by their leaders to maintain their national identity, to resist British and other alien influences with all their might, to avoid assimilation in any of its forms. One of the strongest forces to hold them to this line has been the Dutch Reformed Church, whose *predikants* have condemned scientific progress and political and economic reform. The Boer is essentially a farmer. For years his priests, striving to maintain a widely scattered following that might be uninfluenced by urban life, taught him that machines were ungodly and sinful and that the wrath of the Lord would smite those who employed them. The Boer was virtually chained to his farm to live as his forefathers had done before him.

Olive Schreiner, author of *The Story of an African Farm*, has described better than anybody the superstitious and conservative character of the Dutch Afrikaaner. A passage in her book tells of the shocked reproof of a middle-aged Dutchwoman when she learned that the new way to make soap was with soda. She says: "If the dear Father had meant soda to be put into soap, what would He have made milk-bushes for, and stuck them all over the veld as thick as lambs in the lambing season? . . . My mother boiled soap with bushes, and I will boil soap with bushes. If the wrath of God is to fall on this land, it shall not be through me. Let them make their steam-wagons and their fire-carriages; let them go on as though the dear Lord didn't know what He was about when He gave horses and oxen legs—the destruction of the Lord will follow them. I don't know how such people read their Bibles. When do we hear of Moses and Noah riding in a railway?"

The poor-white Afrikaaner population, living on the same subsistence

level as the Bantus, is primarily the result of the Boers' inability or stubborn refusal to learn agricultural science. Like the Bantu, the Boer likes to wander from one area to another, tilling the soil until it is no longer fertile, shooting the wild game until it ceases to exist. Five hundred thousand poor whites have lost their land mainly because of this. The back-veld Boer even today sticks to the old-fashioned, slovenly methods of agriculture. In the Northern Transvaal I asked a Boer who was complaining bitterly of drought conditions whether he had dug irrigation ditches. He looked at me in astonishment. He said: "The Lord knows best. I must not seek to hinder His work. If it does not rain, the Lord means it not to. I will dig no ditches."

"What *will* you do?"

"I shall pray, and in the Lord's good time the rain will come."

I have heard it said that much of the Boers' love of the past and refusal to adopt the modern conveniences of the twentieth century are due to plain laziness. The rural Afrikaaner does a minimum of work. His Bantu labourers till his soil and tend his cattle. The white *baas* is usually to be found on his stoop, drinking incredibly large quantities of steaming black coffee or out on the veld shooting up the last family of springbok. In the Orange Free State I have seen large Afrikaaner-owned farms going to waste because the farmer believes there is gold on his land. South Africa's main gold reef runs for about eighty miles through the Transvaal and the Orange Free State at varying depths. Then it disappears. But prospectors and drills are scattered all over the northern part of the Free State because there is a belief that somewhere the reef rises to workable heights. If a gold-mining company believes that the reef runs through a certain farm, it will take out an option on the land from the farmer. And the farmer's imagination will run wild. He will neglect his farm, he will get credit at a store in the nearest town, go on a buying spree and run himself into debt. The mining company, meanwhile, may have decided that their first hunch was wrong, that the "reef" they had discovered was merely an unworkable offshoot of the main reef—and decline to take up the option.

Up to a few years ago Afrikaaner rural folk with cash to spare would sometimes speculate on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. The rising price of gold, the almost daily discovery of gold-bearing land and the steadily advancing output of the existing mines were naturally accompanied by an upward trend of gold-mining shares. But there were virtually no restrictions on the activities of the gold-mining companies. False rumours would be spread unblushingly to force up the price of shares if certain leading company directors found themselves a little short of cash. They would then unload them on the unlucky public, making a fat profit for themselves. The Afrikaaner farmer, away from the hubbub of Johannesburg, would rely solely on his local broker to supply him with tips. The broker would get a rumour, urge his client to buy—and within a few days the farmer would have lost his money.

Banking and industry are almost exclusively in the hands of the British in South Africa. Consequently the Afrikaaner blames the British for his plight when he loses money on the gold market. In late years the Afrikaaner has also become an anti-Semite. Many Afrikaaner M.P.s have told him that the Jews are the bankers and the international financiers

and that they are running South Africa. General Hertzog's statements in favour of the Nazis have helped spread anti-Semitism. And the Dutch Reformed Church has tacitly approved it by refusing to come out against it, despite the appeals of other Protestant and Catholic leaders; indeed, not some, but many, Afrikaaner priests have insidiously fostered its growth.

Johannesburg, because more than 30,000 of its 385,000 population is Jewish, is sometimes snidely called "Jewburg". Rabid Afrikaaner nationalist leaders have deplored the fact that there are 102,000 Jews in the Union, that most of them are white-collar workers, industrial employers, shopkeepers or members of the professions. The Jews did much to build up the secondary industries in South Africa—i.e. industries other than gold and diamond mining—concentrating particularly on the manufacture of clothes and furniture. Their factories employ thousands of young urban Afrikaaners. Anti-Semitism is as pronounced among Afrikaaner youth as it is among the older generation. The youth groups and Fascist shirt organizations have constantly attacked Jewish employers in industry.

Some years ago Afrikaaners complained that too many Jews were entering South African universities. Today all the universities have rigid Jewish quotas. Hundreds of Jewish youths have been forced to go overseas, mostly to Britain and Germany, to become lawyers and doctors. And when they return to the Union they must pass South African examinations before they are permitted to practise their professions.

In the early days of white colonization in South Africa the Afrikaaners were not so antagonistic towards the Jews. The fact that both peoples cherished the Bible even formed a basis for friendship. Paul Kruger, the most revered Boer of them all, contributed money to Palestinian charities. The Afrikaaners loved Kruger deeply and until his death there was no sign of any widespread anti-Semitism. The disease first began to attain large proportions with the development of the poor-white problem. The poor whites, looking round for any scapegoat, decided with the help of professional propagandists that the Jews could be safely added to the English as the primary reason for their unfortunate position, with the Bantus taking second place. After 1933, when Nazi propaganda began to pollute the minds of most Afrikaaners, it was suddenly discovered that South Africa's foremost author, Sarah Gertrude Millin, was a Jewess; and that Moses Kottler, South Africa's only sculptor of note, was a Jew. This just went to show, said the Afrikaaners, how far Jewish influences had penetrated the art and culture of the country. The poor whites, because of economic hardships, had barely learned to read and write. They certainly gave not a hoot for art and culture. But they nodded their heads in rapt approval. It just went to show, they told one another.

The Boer is a brooder, a heavy-hearted fellow, whether on the veld or in the cities. He lacks completely a sense of humour. He falls victim so easily to highly emotional propaganda dwelling on the heroic acts of his forefathers because he feels there is no future so long as the British and the Jews remain in South Africa. And the present is grim and full of humiliation.

There is, however, an entirely erroneous notion that the Afrikaaners and the English-speaking people of South Africa still disagree on how to treat the natives. On the contrary, it is one of the few things on which

they do agree. The keystone of their policy is that the native must be kept "in his place", that there shall be "no equality between black and white either in church or state".

The British in South Africa have made their homes there. Most of them have never even visited England. The Afrikaaners accuse them of having one foot planted in South Africa and the other in England; but they are still essentially South Africans and as such they have frequently deplored the protests of various groups in England which insist that the natives be given equal rights with the whites. They are almost as boorish as the Boers in this respect. I say *almost*, because the English-speaking South Africans would not tolerate a return to the slave system of the nineteenth-century Boers. Neither would the few thousand forward-looking Afrikaaners. But that is precisely what the wildly nationalist Afrikaaner, the out-and-out Fascist Afrikaaner and the gruesome backveld Boer intend to do when and if they get their "free" republic.

#### IV

#### SMUTS

JAN CHRISTIAN SMUTS, PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA, is an indispensable man. This is not so much a compliment as a steel-hard fact. There is no one else in sight who could keep South Africa's two peoples from each other's throats during the war—and for some time after it. Smuts is indispensable because the Union's other Big Names in politics are out to break with the British Commonwealth and to make a separate peace with Germany. South Africa needs Smuts a hundred times more than England needs Churchill. There are men in England who could step into Churchill's shoes. But if Smuts were to die, his Government would commit suicide. Without his influence and control it would split into fiercely warring factions. All of its members are loyal to Smuts, many are lukewarm towards each other, while others would have no hesitation in fighting among themselves. Some would probably throw in their lot with one or the other anti-war opposition parties. Co-operation with Britain would be virtually over—unless the Axis was on the point of defeat. Then, with Smuts' passing, the English-speaking people and the few "loyal" Afrikaaners would form South Africa's fifth column—a fifth column friendly to the Allies.

Smuts is as important as that.

With all the restraining influences levelled against him, he has nevertheless geared South Africa to war. More than 160,000 South African troops are spread from the Cape to Cairo. More than 600 factories are turning out armoured cars, trucks, shells, bombs and hand grenades. It is not Smuts' fault that South Africa's war effort could be twice as intense; for that the essential factor is missing: Unity.

The South Africans call Smuts "Slim Jannie". "Slim" means wily in the Afrikaans language. Smuts is as shrewd as they come, so "Slim Jannie" is not always a term of affection or admiration. His political enemies call him that when they want to discredit his motives. Smuts

is loved in South Africa, but he is also hated. Thousands of Afrikaaners have never forgiven him for co-operating with the British after the Boer War, during the World War—and then again in 1939. "Smuts lost touch with Afrikaanedom years ago," a Nationalist M.P. said to me. "We'll never see a republic as long as Smuts is alive." The trouble with Smuts, from the Nationalists' viewpoint, is that he strives to be fair and square with both Briton and Boer. Smuts sees no permanent peace in South Africa without real racial unity. Since the Boer War he has worked for it. Many a visitor to South Africa comes away believing that the Briton-Boer conflict is unhappily a permanent South African institution. At best, it will take generations to wear out, but Smuts won't stop until he has achieved some real measure of success.

Smuts comes from mixed Dutch and French Huguenot stock. He was born a British subject in the Cape Province in 1870. His father, Jacobus Abraham Smuts, was a Dutch farmer who wanted his son to follow in his footsteps. His mother, Catharina de Vries, was a Huguenot who wanted her son to become a scholar. Young Smuts learned to read and write at the age of twelve, attending school in the village of Riebeeck West, a few miles from his home. Four years later he graduated to Victoria College, in Stellenbosch. He never worked on his father's farm again. He bowled over his professors by memorizing Greek grammar in a week. And he was bowled over by the beauty of a fellow-student, Sybilla Margaratha Krige, who was later to become his wife.

Smuts' hero in his college days was Cecil Rhodes, whom he heard speak before the students of Victoria College. He was particularly impressed with Rhodes' vision of a united Africa, a single sovereign state embracing the entire continent. That principle, which he has never abandoned, is the dangerous side of Smuts. Even some of his friends in England fear that Smuts is sometimes too ambitious, and that his ambition will destroy him. Belgians in the Congo, Frenchmen in the equatorial zone, Britons in the mandates and in Rhodesia don't want to be incorporated into the Union. They are doing as good a job of governing as the Union, and sometimes they are distinctly more liberal. The natives especially would be happier outside the Unions' jurisdiction. Smuts is no liberal as far as Africa's 15,000,000 natives are concerned. He would have to undergo a fundamental, *political* change of heart before they would listen to his pleas for a United States of Africa. First and foremost, he would have to demonstrate his sincerity by abolishing the colour bar and the native feudal laws in the Union; and since cheap black labour is the basis of the Union's economy, he would have an almost insurmountable task in getting the South African whites to let him do it.

There is some reason to believe that Smuts may have modified his programme for a united Africa. At an interview in 1942 with American reporters he was asked whether he thought such parts of Africa as the Belgian Congo and Portuguese East Africa should be absorbed into the Union. "Slim Jannie" didn't offend anybody. He replied that the period of "political annexation" had gone for ever, and that peoples would work "voluntarily" together in the future.

Smuts won a scholarship in 1891 to Cambridge University, where he studied law. His work was brilliant. He became interested in philosophy, and wrote a book called *Walt Whitman: A Study in the Evolution*.

of *Personality*. It was never published, but was regarded as a fine piece of work for a man so young in years. Later, scholars hailed it as a great psycho-analytical study. In 1895 Smuts returned to his homeland and became a member of the Cape Bar. He was scheduled to become one of the men closest to Rhodes, but changed his mind when he learned that Rhodes was involved in the scandalous Jameson Raid on the Boers.

Smuts decided to quit the Cape Colony and seek his fortune in Paul Kruger's Transvaal Republic. He went up to Johannesburg; gave up his British nationality and put his services at the disposal of Kruger. "Oom Paul", the shrewdest Boer of them all, quickly learned to appreciate Smuts' talents and ability. He made Smuts his State Attorney. And Smuts was only twenty-eight.

Then came the Boer War. Smuts, in futile negotiations with the British, had tried to prevent it. It was a personal tragedy for him when the first shots were fired. But there was no turning back. He fought the British with all his energy, leading a guerrilla band against them after the fall of Pretoria, the Transvaal capital. For two years he harried British columns in the Cape Province as they made their way up north. At night he would dismount from his Basuto pony and read a Greek testament and Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, both of which he knew by heart, according to an incredible legend.

Some years later Smuts met Winston Churchill, who as a British newspaper correspondent had covered the war and had been captured by the Boers. "Did you think you had a chance of winning?" Churchill asked him.

Smuts replied: "After the war had been going on for six months I was sure we had lost it. But we had to fight on—for a just peace and to command respect in the years to come. If we had surrendered, the British would have treated us as rebels instead of as a people."

But Smuts' guerrillas were never defeated. In 1902, when the peace negotiations were opened, Smuts was besieging a British force at Ookiep in the Cape. He was disgusted with a peace that made the old Boer Republics a Crown Colony. He was offered a position by the British on the Transvaal Legislative Council; but he refused to accept it, retiring in disappointment from public life altogether for the next two years. But when Paul Kruger died, Smuts re-emerged to help Kruger's right-hand man, Louis Botha, to form a pro-Afrikaaner People's Party. Louis Botha became South Africa's Grand Old Man, but Smuts did most of the work. In 1905 Smuts went to England to ask Britain's newly elected Liberal Party for a return to responsible Government in South Africa. The British, somewhat ashamed of the muddled politics that had brought on the Boer War, gave Smuts what he wanted.

Smuts was wildly grateful. For the first time in his life he forgot to be shrewd. He wrote: "They gave us back—in everything but name—our country. Has such a miracle of trust and magnanimity ever happened before? Only people like the English could do it. They make mistakes but they're a big people."

Smuts has never lived that statement down among the Boer irreconcilables. He was called a traitor, a turncoat, a man without honour among his people, and even worse. "Slim Jannie", they said, was a little bit too slim that time. Nevertheless, Botha and Smuts won the 1907 election, Botha becoming Prime Minister and Smuts holding the

portfolios of Colonial Secretary and Minister of Education. And in 1910, thanks to Smuts' efforts, the four South African provinces were welded together under the same "responsible" Government. In 1926 the Union of South Africa was granted full-fledged Dominion status.

South African labour never counted Smuts among its friends. In January, 1914, Smuts put down a strike of white railroad men and miners by calling out troops and deporting the leaders without trial. A commission of South African judges, which had established that some of the strikers' grievances were genuine enough, was outraged. Even the British Government quietly rapped Smuts over the knuckles for such high-handed and hasty action.

The outbreak of the First World War, as in its 1939 successor, was marked in South Africa by Boer attempts to salvage their lost independence. Parliament voted for Smuts' policy of war at the side of Britain against the Kaiser. But General Maritz and some of Smuts' comrades in the Boer War led a short rebellion, financed by German money, which cost more than three hundred lives. Maritz said: "I do not want the land ruled by Englishmen, niggers and Jews." One of the rebels warned the British in South Africa not to put down the rebellion. He said: "This is a family affair among us Afrikaaners."

Smuts took the hint. He suppressed the revolt with regiments of loyal Afrikaaners. Not a British soldier participated. And when one of the rebel leaders was captured, Smuts and Botha wisely did not condemn him to death. The irreconcilables were angry enough without a martyr to give them encouragement. So they fined the rebel ten shillings. In England the British heaved a sigh of relief. They called it the "Ten-Bob Rebellion".

But it did not make Smuts any the more popular. Not even after his brilliant campaign in German South-west Africa—one of the first Allied successes of the war—could Smuts shake off the bitter resentment of many of his countrymen. In the election campaign of 1915 Smuts' Party lost ground. Three Ministers of Botha's Government were defeated. The Opposition Parties had gained so much that the Government was left without a working majority. Smuts was tired of South African politics. There had been threats against his life in Johannesburg. He said that he "would like nothing better than to be out of this hell into which I have wandered and in which I have lived for the last two years".

The following year, as a General in the British Army, Smuts started the campaign against the Germans in German East Africa. In 1917 he took Botha's place at an Imperial Conference of Dominion Premiers. He was well received by the English, who had been impressed by his handling of the 1914 rebellion. Lloyd George invited him to join his War Cabinet. Smuts' work was instrumental in the creation of Britain's first Air Force. He was sent on all kinds of missions, visited foreign kings and prime ministers, reported on the military situation at the front, helped plan war strategy, presided over Britain's War Priorities Commission. He was truly "the Empire's handy man", as one South African author dubbed him.

Soon his popularity was so great in England that Lloyd George called upon him to settle a coalminers' strike in South Wales. Lloyd George, a Welshman himself, explained that the British Navy might be paralysed if the miners did not go back to work. The Navy's coal reserves, he said,





PRIME MINISTER JAN CHRISTIAAN SMUTS.

*South African Official Photo.*



THE LATE GENERAL J. B. M. HERTZOG.

*[British Combine Photo.]*

would last only another two weeks. Smuts was wary. He hoped that the South Wales miners were not familiar with his method of settling strikes. Probably for the first time in his career, Smuts asked for advice. Lloyd George offered none. He did, however, mention in passing: "My fellow countrymen are great singers." Smuts remembered that casual remark.

When Smuts arrived in South Wales he found the strikers lining the roads, eying him suspiciously. "I really think they expected me to be a black man," Smuts said later. "They looked so astonished when they saw I wasn't."

Smuts, faced by an angry crowd of strikers, decided that his usual bare-arm tactics perhaps wouldn't work in South Wales. He asked the miners to sing. After a loud rendering of "Land of My Fathers" they seemed infinitely more disposed to listen to the South African's pleas that they return to work. Smuts told them that Wales was just as much the front line as France. He repeated his speech several times during the day. Each appeal was preceded by a Welsh song. At the next day's Cabinet meeting in London Smuts was told that the miners had gone back to work.

Smuts is best known outside of South Africa for his planning of the League of Nations. He became closely associated with Woodrow Wilson, and together they drafted many of the clauses of the Covenant. Smuts was against the Versailles Treaty, claiming that it bred "a spirit of revenge that may scorch the fair face—not of a corner of Europe, but of Europe". Smuts signed the Treaty under protest.

After he returned to South Africa Botha died, leaving Smuts to assume the premiership. Smuts weathered a storm of criticism until 1924, when the South Africans voted him out of office. His achievements in Europe had never impressed many of his countrymen; they complained that Smuts was too ambitious, that he neglected South Africa, that his unquestioned talents could be put to better use at home. Gen. J. B. M. Hertzog, Smuts' great rival after Botha's death, led those who criticized Smuts. Hertzog had fought against Botha as well. Hertzog's Nationalist Party, representing Boer farmers, rich and poor, made a temporary alliance with white labour in the cities. A common foe had been discovered in Big (British) Business. Labour circles were hostile to Smuts because he had smashed yet another strike, this time in the Rand gold-mines, with the help of troops. Hertzog, although he despised organized labour, said for the sake of politics: "The Prime Minister's footsteps drip with blood."

For the next nine years Hertzog was in power. And Smuts relaxed. He was out of the Government until 1933, when a coalition Government was established, with Hertzog as Prime Minister and Smuts as Minister of Justice, to combat the depression.

In an off-the-record interview with Smuts in 1939 he impressed me as a man of tremendous vitality and brilliance. He was not to be trapped by any of my questions. I knew of the deep-flowing difference of opinion between him and Hertzog as Europe moved nearer to war. I wanted him to know that I knew, and hoped that he would respond with a few innuendoes, if nothing else. But not Smuts. Not once did his eyes show a flicker of understanding, resentment or surprise when I suggested that

perhaps the Government might be drastically reorganized in the event of war. His replies were masterpieces of diplomatic nothingness.

"Smuts won't say anything," a Cape Town journalist had assured me. "He'll talk, but he won't say anything."

And he was right. *But I knew from what Smuts did not say that the Government was heading for a crisis.* He refused to discuss Hertzog, his Prime Minister. There was a painful silence when I mentioned Minister of Defence Oswald Pirow's trip to Berlin. And then, slowly, carefully choosing his words, Smuts said that Nazi Germany would never get its African colonies back, if he had anything to do with it. That was when I knew. The implication was that it might be a totally different story if it was left to some members of the Government to decide whether or not a place for Germany could be found in Africa.

What strikes you at once about Smuts are his eyes. They are incredibly blue, cold and hard; they never flinch. When I saw them I realized why the South African natives are afraid of him. Those eyes can be frightening. They reveal all the courage—and obstinacy—in him. Smuts is a strict teetotaler, has never smoked and leads a Spartan life. One of his chief interests is botany. When his Government fell in 1924 Smuts disappeared for three days. He trudged across one of South Africa's broad velds with nothing but an empty tin can and a package of sandwiches. Three days later he reappeared. His colleagues had given him up for dead. But Smuts was not to be perturbed by their anxiety. "Do you know," he told them, "I've discovered several new grasses in the past few days! Look!"

Grey-bearded and handsome, Smuts can outwalk anyone of his age. When in Cape Town he lives in the Prime Minister's official residence, but only stays there during his six hours of sleep. Before dawn he rises to take a hike up Table Mountain's steep sides. On his farm near Pretoria in the Transvaal he sleeps on the verandah—or did until his guards put a stop to it when war broke out. The Prime Minister has another official residence in Pretoria, the Union's legislative capital. But Smuts uses it only for official purposes. He dislikes its grandeur; he infinitely prefers the simplicity of his farmhouse.

After a day's work in the Government Buildings of Pretoria, Smuts goes home, dons a pair of old faded khaki shorts to trek over his fields and wooded acres. His footsteps are dogged by his guards, alert young men who puff and blow behind him, trying to keep his pace. Smuts tries to dodge them on these hikes; he likes solitude. But his guard has been trebled since the war. Plain-clothed, they wander over his grounds, stand alert at the gates of his farm.

There is no doubt that countless Afrikaaners would like to see Smuts dead. That is why he is guarded so closely. But Smuts defends the enemies among his own countrymen, saying: "They are a good people, a good people. This is only politics. They will come back. I like them."

Smuts keeps a pet lioness on his Pretoria farm. She is as tame as a dog and is allowed to roam at will through the grounds and house. Smuts roars with laughter when visitors beat a hasty retreat on first spying the beast. Smuts, unlike most Afrikaaners, has a semblance of a sense of humour. Many years ago a young girl asked him for his autograph.

Smuts obliged her, but when she looked at his signature she cried: "Why, aren't you General Botha, then?"

"No," Smuts replied, "I'm sorry, but I'm not; lend me your eraser."

Smuts, however, was flooded by George Bernard Shaw when they met in Cape Town. Smuts is a puritan; he is shy about sex. Shaw knew this and insisted on asking Smuts whether he did not agree that all girls of sixteen should be made to read D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Smuts scarcely knew what Shaw was talking about; he probably had an uncomfortable feeling that Shaw was making fun of him. Shaw tried a few more Shavianisms on Smuts, but none of them produced the effect Shaw obviously expected. The Irishman asked to be introduced to some of his Bantu advisers. Smuts remained bewildered until the end.

Smuts looks at life philosophically. He often wondered, before leading his commandos against the British during the Boer War, how he would face death. "I was not affected," he says. "No, I was utterly callous. It amazed me. I could not understand myself. But then, I saw the other men were callous too. And they were callous in the Great War. The normal men were callous. The men who were affected by the dead and wounded were the neurotics. Afterwards I remembered."

Smuts has an amazing memory. He knows more about the files of his offices than his secretaries do. Best of all, he remembers names and faces. In 1933 Smuts was about to climb aboard a 'plane at Croydon aerodrome, near London. Suddenly he saw a policeman standing beside the 'plane. "I've seen you somewhere before," said Smuts. "Yes," said the policeman, "you saw me *thirty-one years ago* at the peace conference at Vereeniging."

Smuts did not have to be told any more. "Of course," he said. "You're the little trumpeter Kennedy who used to stroke my Basuto pony's tail!"

Smuts is an accomplished linguist. He speaks French and German as fluently as English and his native Afrikaans. He also knows several African dialects. His English has only the slightest trace of a Dutch accent. He is a fine orator with a powerful voice and clear-cut delivery.

Smuts sports a goatee, white and nicely pointed; without it Smuts would lose much of his elegant, statesmanlike appearance. He wears loose-fitting clothes and wing collars, but prefers his army uniform. Age has not weakened him physically; his handshake is firm; his love of speed sometimes frightens even his private chauffeur. When Smuts rode an American-built jeep in Egypt the American driver drove carefully and slowly, aware that Smuts was an old man. But Smuts would have none of it; he urged the driver to keep his foot down. The jeep picked up speed. Smuts shouted, "Faster, faster!"

When Smuts arrived in London by 'plane from the Middle East in October, 1942, he appeared unfatigued after his long journey. Churchill greeted him on the steps of No. 10 Downing Street, saying: "How are you, old man? I hope they fixed you up better than they did me, because I found myself slipping off the bed in the 'plane."

Smuts' reply was significant. He had come to London to help plan an offensive strategy for the United Nations. "As far as the 'plane is concerned, I have no complaints," he said.

When you meet Smuts you get the feeling that he is a young man in a middle-aged man's body. He has no right to be in his seventies. And you know that death won't take him in bed; Smuts would never permit it.

## V

## CAPE POLITICS

I HAD SHIVERED ON THE TOP OF TABLE MOUNTAIN MOST OF THE NIGHT, waiting for the stars to pale and the dawn to come. My Indian waiter at Cape Town's White House Hotel had urged me not to miss the sight of the sun rising over the "Tavern of the Seas", as the ancient mariners called Cape Town. From Table Mountain, he declared, dawn over the port was more breath-taking than the Taj Mahal in moonlight.

But it was not the dawn that struck me when the sun, purple, red and flaming yellow, pulled off Table Mountain's white cloth of mist and broke through to light up Cape Town. It was the perspective that mountain gave me. Every dissident Boer should be made to climb it; he should be taken firmly by the collar and forced to gaze down on Cape Town's great harbour, and then up across the ocean where almost every day scores of ships sail round the Cape of Good Hope carrying war materials to Russia, Egypt and India. He should be asked what it would mean to South Africa and the world if Cape Town, the only port of its size under Allied control between England and the Far East, should fall into enemy hands. What price his neutrality then? What price his precious acres, his freedom to cultivate or not to cultivate, his herds of cattle? What price his liberty or even his life?

Visiting Germans and Japanese had been climbing Table Mountain for years before the outbreak of World War Two. They were more aware of South Africa's strategical importance than the Boers. The Japanese shipping line that maintained a regular service between Cape Town across the South Atlantic to Buenos Aires, Argentina, was not in business for freight and passenger traffic alone. The German East Africa Steamship Company made Cape Town a port of call. When I descended the mountain on that sunny morning in 1939, I learned that four German seamen had been arrested a few hours earlier for photographing prohibited areas of the port. The arrests had coincided with a debate in the Cape Town Parliament on Nazi activities in Southern Africa.

District Six, the laconic name given to the appalling slum area where Cape Town's Hottentot and half-caste population lives, had the reputation of a Nazi centre of espionage. Many a coloured man, watching his children coughing and spitting up blood, was willing to work well for a few pounds. His work was easy, too. He had only to find out from his dock-worker friends what quantities of explosives were kept in the arsenal, whether any steps had been taken to defend Cape Town from the air, the disposition of naval craft at Simonstown, South Africa's one and only naval base, located a few miles away; he kept his eye also on port expansion projects and kept himself informed about cargoes unloaded on the wharves.

The course of South Africa's politics had made the country easy prey for Nazi propaganda and espionage. The South Africans were busy squabbling among themselves; there was the age-old conflict between Boer, or Afrikaaner, and Briton. Added to that was the constant struggle between black and white.

These characteristics of South African life were and still are the basis of its politics. They are today more sharply felt than at any time since the Anglo-Boer War. And they have bred sabotage and treason and a war effort dangerously sapped by disunity.

There was a time when it looked as though Afrikaaners and English-speaking peoples might be capable of real and lasting co-operation. In 1932 a depression hit the Union of South Africa, threatening it with economic collapse. Only a government that represented the broad mass of the white population could put the country on its feet again. The late General James Barry Munnik Hertzog was the Union's Prime Minister. He was a contemporary of Smuts but always had been firmly opposed to Smuts' co-operation with Britain. He termed himself a "loose associationist", meaning that his ideal was to prize looser and looser the bonds of empire between England and South Africa. An Afrikaaner republic, free from every British influence, was what Hertzog wanted. His Afrikaaner Nationalist Party had battled Smuts' pro-British South African Party tooth-and-nail ever since the early days of the Union. In 1924 Hertzog wrested the premiership from Smuts. It was Hertzog's rule that helped bring South Africa to the brink of economic disaster.

Late in 1933, therefore, Hertzog decided to call a truce in his cat-and-dog fight with Smuts. He asked Smuts to join the Cabonet; their two political parties were merged. A new Government, with Hertzog remaining as Prime Minister and Smuts taking the Ministry of Justice, was formed. It was known as the Fusion Government; and the Government Party was named the United Party.

But this arrangement did not please everybody. A new and violent Nationalist Party was established by a fiery anti-Semite named Dr. Daniel Francis Malan, one of Hertzog's former henchmen. Its membership consisted of those of the old Nationalist Party who hated Smuts and the English so vehemently that they refused to support the idea of fusion. Their platform was Afrikaaner republicanism, anti-Semitism and totalitarianism.

A few British diehards who felt that Smuts had deserted the cause of the British Empire sided with Colonel Stallard, a crusty, empire-building Englishman with as much personality as a frog and therefore quite unable to build up any formidable opposition. A small Labour Party, led by a harmless and half-hearted trade-union supporter named William Maddeley, was also established to combat Smuts' demonstrated anti-labour stand.

By 1936 South Africa had emerged from the economic crisis and was well on the broad highway to prosperity. Many United Party members were already longing to conduct their politics along the old pre-depression racial lines—now that it seemed safe. Dozens of them always had shared the sympathies of the Nationalists and were now criticizing them less and less. Dr. Malan's Nationalists had gained ground and were beginning to emphasize their programme of an independent Afrikaaner republic more and more. They led stormy debates calling for the abolition of the British national anthem and the British flag. Dr. Malan repeatedly charged that the Government was coddling the blacks—a terrible slander! These debates served to accentuate the splits that, behind the scenes, were threatening to wreck the fusion experiment. Cliques had formed in the Fusion Cabinet and in the United Party itself. Only personal loyalty,

either to Smuts or Hertzog, and the absence of a real issue prevented them from shattering fusion sooner than they did.

But it was quite clear even in 1937 that such opposites as Jan Hofmeyr, a fine liberal with a good word for the black man, and Oswald Pirow, a reactionary who had said he would welcome the Nazis to Africa, could not serve in the same Cabinet without dangerous friction.

These were exactly the kind of differences Dr. Malan was thriving on. The more he raised issues likely to cause dissension in the Cabinet and the United Party, the weaker the Government would become, and the better his chances to wrest control from Hertzog and Smuts. And the Boers on South Africa's endless velds, those who wanted to fight the 1899-1902 war over again, worshipped Dr. Malan. He aired their old prejudices and made them articulate.

"Malan's one of the best politicians South Africa ever had," a United Party M.P. said to me. "He knows just where the sore spots lie, and he goes for them like a bull at a gate. You can't compromise with Malan; it's all or nothing with him. He'll even rewrite history to prove a point; he'll do anything—and his followers love him for it."

One of Malan's more spectacular stunts was to introduce a bill forbidding Jews of all nationalities to reside in the Union. Malan was quite aware that it had no chance of becoming law. But he was also quite sure that it would stimulate anti-Semitism in the Union—and so be a force that would cause strife and bitterness. The poor whites welcomed it almost to a man. More Jews were beaten up by roving bands of Afrikaaner youths while the bill was before Parliament than at any other time. There were thousands of Afrikaaners, in addition to the poor whites, who supported it privately but were afraid to say so. And not a few members of the United Party told Malan they would have *liked* to vote for it. The 102,000 Jews in the Union ignored the bill for the most part, but there was no doubt that they had had a bad scare—which once again was just what the irrepressible Malan wanted.

The 1938 elections, the roughest and dirtiest in South Africa's history, coincided with the centenary celebrations of the Great Trek of 1838 when the Boers moved into South Africa's hinterland to establish their own republics. Young Afrikaaners grew full beards to show their respect for their Voortrekker ancestors. The Great Trek was re-enacted. As the old ox-wagons rolled through the towns and villages the Afrikaaners whipped themselves into a wild nationalistic fervour. The blacks kept discreetly out of sight, especially the older ones with beards. In Pretoria, bearded Bantus had been hacked about the face with penknives by Afrikaaner youths. Local mayors delivered addresses of welcome as the 1938 Great Trek passed through their communities. The addresses were made in the Afrikaans language. Woe betide the mayor of British stock who inadvertently spoke in English!

The Nationalists and the country's Fascist organizations indulged in an orgy of anti-British propaganda. Up in Johannesburg, industrial hub of the Union, there were rumours of a pending Afrikaaner uprising to oust the British and the Jews. Some of the English-speaking newspaper offices were besieged by angry crowds of bearded Afrikaaners yelling for the blood of the editors.

The elections had also been aggravated by the Munich crisis. The



Nationalists stressed the neutrality issue and charged the Government with attempting to drag South Africa into the hopeless tangle of European politics. The absence of a Government neutrality pledge made their accusation sound logical enough. While not involving the Union, Hertzog had been obediently trailing Chamberlain's appeasement policy. The Nationalists argued that South Africa did not need any kind of a foreign policy except in the field of trade. The Fascists pledged that if they were the Government they wouldn't lift a finger to help England—even if the enemy attacked Rhodesia, on the Union's northern border.

The Government won the elections, but not without stirring up a great deal of bitterness. And even the layman was beginning to wonder if all was well in the United Party.

It was evident late in 1938 that Hertzog and Smuts did not see eye to eye on the Union's role in foreign affairs and that each of them had their individual supporters both in the Cabinet and in the United Party.

An ardent Smuts adherent in the United Party said to me early in 1939: "We don't know *what* Hertzog is thinking. He's as tight as a clam. But we suspect him of absolute isolationist sympathies. It's his fault, not Smuts', that the Party's falling to pieces. If only *he* would take a stand, then *we* would know where we stand."

The fusion experiment was smashed the moment war broke out 7,000 miles away in Europe. It was Smuts' compelling personality that pulled South Africa through that crisis. But for Smuts there might easily have been civil war.

After Chamberlain's declaration of war on Germany the South Africans were left gazing rather absently at the knobs on their radio sets, wondering what Hertzog would do now. The rumours flew thick and fast: Hertzog would remain neutral; Smuts was a broken man. The officers of the defence forces were all for Hertzog, and units were already being rushed to predominantly British districts like Durban to put down possible revolts.

But it looked as though the English-speaking people just would not tolerate neutrality. To placate their suspicions, a Cabinet Minister announced: "It is the greatest of libels to say that Hertzog is out for neutrality."

A few hours after Hitler's legions had crossed the Polish frontier, Hertzog summoned his Cabinet. Without any discussion he told the Ministers what he intended to do. He said: "I am going to remain neutral, and under no circumstances allow South Africa to enter this war." Smuts and his supporters in the Cabinet argued heatedly for four hours, but to no avail. The Prime Minister's determination was inflexible. Like the petty would-be dictator he was, Hertzog melodramatically held up his hand for silence. In a low, clear voice he addressed his colleagues: "Gentlemen," he said, "*I am Prime Minister of this country. This is what I have decided.*"

It was Hertzog all over—dogmatic, autocratic, brimming over with hate and bitterness for the English. And it was Hertzog the dishonourable. During the years of fusion he had headed a coalition Government pledged to Anglo-Afrikaaner unity; he had waged a seemingly bitter parliamentary campaign against Dr. Malan's Nationalists, whose views, though more violent, were closer to his than to Smuts' dream of Anglo-Afrikaaner amity. But by 1936 members of the United Party had begun to suspect Hertzog of surreptitious negotiation with the Nationalist Oppo-

sition. His colleagues had begun to feel that rule by the Cabinet system had almost fallen into disuse. Hertzog seldom consulted his Ministers on important issues, and all too frequently they were forced to swallow their opinions and pride for what they hoped would be the greater good of the country. During those six and a half years of fusion a Cabinet crisis—which might well have smashed the United Party and paved the way for the Nationalists—was avoided. But when the Hertzog Government was faced with a vital national issue the Cabinet system collapsed.

Nearly a week after Britain had declared war, then, Prime Minister Hertzog appeared before a hushed Union Parliament. Nobody except his Ministers could be certain of his stand. In a quiet, unemotional voice, almost as if he were passing judgment on some trivial piece of legislation, Hertzog advised neutrality for South Africa.

"There is not one iota of proof," he said, "that Herr Hitler is out for world domination. I have gone through the same struggle as Herr Hitler, and I know what it is to be trampled underfoot so long that one prefers destruction to further humiliation. . . . We have not the least right to enter this war."

For a moment the assembled M.P.s were silent; apparently the weight of Hertzog's words had overawed them. Then there was a burst of cheering from the Nationalist benches—and, almost as loud, mingled cheering and booing from the Government benches. Hertzog kept his eyes fixed on the floor. Not once did he look up during his entire address. When the House had been called to order, Hertzog declared that the Afrikaanders had no ties with Britain, not even sentimental ones. The war, he said, was being fought by Germany to right the wrongs done by "that monster", the Versailles Treaty. The majority of English-speaking people in South Africa, Hertzog argued, were more devoted to England than to South Africa.

There was no doubt about it now. Fusion had failed. Hertzog was right back where he had been before 1933. He had kept his views on foreign affairs a close secret. Those who had suspected him of isolationism were caught neatly off-guard when, less than five months before the outbreak of war, he had berated Dr. Malan for his neutrality policy. "Dr. Malan, we know it, does not want to be involved in a war under any circumstances," he had declared. "He prefers to run away."

But the English-speaking people of South Africa could have turned back the pages of recent history to determine which road their Prime Minister would take. In 1933 he had said: "I think that this revolution (Nazi) is being conducted in such a way that in a few years you will find it has been of great benefit not only to Germany but to the whole world." Despite this and later pro-Nazi statements the South Africans were not astute enough to decide that Hertzog was a Fascist until his defence of Hitler before Parliament in 1939. Hertzog, unlike Smuts, had concerned himself almost exclusively with domestic affairs. And like so many other peoples, the South Africans could recognize Fascism only when they saw it in Germany or Italy, not when it was pressed to their noses in their own country. For under Hertzog's rule the South African natives had been reduced to a lower level than the Jews in Germany, as several chapters in this book will show.

It was Smuts who led the debate against Hertzog's motion of neutrality

in Parliament. In a well-balanced, carefully worded speech, he outlined the true issues involved in Europe's new war, called for the defeat of his age-old opponent and the entry of South Africa into the war beside Britain. And by the dangerously narrow margin of thirteen votes Smuts won the day. The House voted eighty to sixty-seven against Hertzog. Hertzog slumped in his seat. His body shook with emotion; he tottered out of the House, head down, his arms stiffly held by his side.

Smuts became the war-time Prime Minister. He quickly set about the task of reorganizing the broken United Party and establishing a War Cabinet that would have majority support in Parliament. It needed all his statesmanship, tact and eloquence. A number of Ministers in the former Cabinet had emerged in their true Afrikaaner Nationalist colours after years of pretending to serve the interests of Boer and Briton impartially. Oswald Pirow was among them. Few were surprised. He had aroused grave international misgivings in 1939 when he visited Hitler and Franco. He was Minister of Defence in the Hertzog Cabinet, and had been making unsubtle bids for the premiership for months. Hertzog and Pirow immediately joined forces with the delighted Dr. Malan to create a Herenigde (Reunited) Party.

And Hertzog, once such a dour demagogue for racial unity, travelled up and down the country trying to foster sympathy for immediate peace with the Axis. In Pretoria, the nation's capital, he addressed 30,000 Afrikaaners, under the shadow of the giant Voortrekker Memorial. He called for a break with the British Commonwealth of Nations and, amid thunderous cheering, demanded the creation of a free Afrikaaner Republic.

A few months later Hertzog's Nationalists believed themselves strong enough to introduce a peace motion in Parliament. The Low Countries and France had been overrun by the Nazis. The British had retreated from Dunkirk. And the Luftwaffe raids on London had begun. Such a succession of defeats was calculated to sway South Africa. The Nationalists felt that it was now or never.

"Only when war operations are properly considered will it be realized how hopelessly the war already is lost," said Hertzog, "and how necessary it is for South Africa to withdraw immediately from it. Nothing but that can save our country from disaster. On land the superiority of Germany is beyond argument and in the air she has shown daily that she is England's superior. On and under the sea Germany has provided proof that she has no need to be afraid of Britain."

Parliament had been profoundly disturbed by Allied defeats. But the majority of the members were in no mood for Hertzog's gloomy words. South Africa had been in the war a year, and there was no getting out of it now. There was no reason to believe that in the event of an Axis victory Hitler would be kindly disposed towards a country that had fought him for a whole year. Before the war Hertzog had been something of a prophet, once predicting the New York Stock Market crash of 1929. But history had let him down hopelessly with his 1939 prophecy that Hitler was not out for world domination. His motion was defeated.

In November, 1940, Hertzog left the Herenigde Party and retired from

active politics. His break came when Malan refused to consider rights for the English-speaking people as a clause in the programme for an Afrikaaner Republic.

In October, 1941, Hertzog announced his support of National Socialism in measured terms. He said: "Nazism is not the exclusive product of any particular country or people, but it came to South Africa as an Afrikaans national tradition and custom and is as old as the Afrikaans people." It was Hertzog speaking his mind openly and frankly; it was Hertzog of the Boer War days. He fought against British interests in South Africa then as he did in World War Two. Like Smuts, Hertzog commanded a division of Boer troops and battled the British untiringly between 1899 and 1902. But, unlike Smuts, he never could forget or forgive. He could never bring himself to help build South Africa so long as it was part of the British Commonwealth.

Hertzog died a broken man in November, 1942. He led no political party. He lived on the £2,000 a year the Smuts Government generously voted him when he gave up the premiership in 1939.

Hertzog's retirement provided an unexpected victory for Smuts' Government. The Nationalists split three ways. Pirow left Malan to form a "New Order" group, which is as ominous as it sounds. Havenga, a follower of Hertzog and Finance Minister in his pre-war Cabinet, broke away to form the Afrikaaner Party, which wanted a republic with minority rights for English South Africans. And Malan carried on with his depleted Herenigde Party.

There is no fundamental difference in the party programmes of Pirow and Malan. Both men are inexhaustibly ambitious; both are equally determined to become South Africa's Fuehrer.

The line-up of the political parties at the time of writing [1943] is as follows:

The United (Government) Party.....	85 seats
The Herenigde (Malan's) Party.....	39 seats
The New Order (Pirow's) Party.....	17 seats
The Afrikaaner (Havenga's Party).....	9 seats

The Government thus has a working majority of twenty.

General Smuts works without rest to keep South Africa from falling apart. Formidable forces are arrayed against him.

## VI

### PIROW AND MALAN

IF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA WERE EVER TO PUBLISH A WHITE PAPER on the Hertzog Government's behaviour in foreign affairs between the Munich crisis and the outbreak of war, Oswald Pirow would stand exposed as perhaps the boldest and most cunning appeaser of them all. For six and a half years Pirow posed as a "fusionist", holding towards the end the vital post of Minister of Defence. When Smuts took over in 1939 he found South Africa in a deplorable state of unpreparedness. Less than

half a dozen factories were turning out armaments. Coastal defences were virtually non-existent. No plans had been formulated for the protection of the Union's ports from air attack.

And when Smuts looked around for an explanation he found Pirow smilingly occupying a seat on the Opposition benches, balking South Africa's participation in the war. Pirow's New Order Party calls for Pirow as Fuehrer of a Fascist Afrikaaner state, and for close co-operation with the Axis in Africa. Smuts had known about Pirow all along, but he was powerless to scotch his plans. Pirow had Hertzog's support.

Much space would be devoted in any South African White Paper to Pirow's mission to Europe in 1938. He visited Hitler, Salazar and Franco. Several English newspapers, more aware of Pirow's Fascism than most South Africans were, declared that Pirow had come to tell Hitler that he could have his African colonies back, or, alternatively, that he could take someone's else. Pirow held his tongue. Out of a constant stream of statements to the Press there was not one sentence that revealed what Pirow was really up to. That he was up to no good was as certain as the rising of the sun. Hitler was loudly demanding the return of his pre-World War colonies. The Germans in the South-west Africa mandate were predominantly Nazi, and were planning a *putsch*. Pirow, a pro-Nazi himself, had decided, on his own volition and against the advice of some of Hertzog's Ministers, to talk things over with Hitler. It was reported that the German Consul in Cape Town had said at the time: "If the Union had more men like Pirow, we'd be back in Africa in no time at all."

Pirow did not offer Hitler a thing without some *quid pro quo*. Pirow was no fool; he had no notions of permitting the Nazis to do him out of his burning ambition to become South Africa's Premier. Pirow had shown the Nazis how he felt about their colonial claims when, before he left South Africa, he had said: "I shall look forward with pleasure to the return of the Germans to Africa, since the Nazis are the only ones who know how to treat the natives."

When asked specifically, Pirow always denied that he had the South-west Africa mandate in mind. That was quite impossible, he used to say. Pirow's offer to Hitler was carefully drawn up so as not to offend the South Africans.

There were many stories concerning Pirow's negotiations in Berlin. Some were surprisingly near the truth, others were wild conjectures in a not unnatural desire to prove Pirow was hand in hand with the Wilhelmstrasse. I learned what I believe firmly to be the facts from sources in Cape Town and London.

Pirow explained to the Nazis that the majority of South Africans—even a large section of the pro-Fascist Afrikaaners—would not stand for South-west Africa under Berlin rule. Moreover, he said, the natives of South-west Africa would give the Nazis a lot of trouble because they still remembered the massacres under former German occupation. Pirow explained that he could not guarantee what would happen if the Nazis *putsched* in South-west Africa. After that the Nazis' respect for Pirow began to disappear. It was not what they had expected Pirow to say.

In the event that the Tanganyika revolt precipitated a war in Europe, Pirow would still undertake to keep South Africa out of it. In exchange, Pirow asked for assurances that, once established in Africa, the Nazis would respect the integrity of the Union of South Africa. He promised that the Union would then be willing to sign a pact of mutual assistance with the Nazis so far as the African sphere of interest was concerned.

A few hours after Pirow had presented his plan he was called before Hitler. The Fuehrer told him flatly that Germany could not give up its claims to South-west Africa. For a half-hour Hitler reprimanded Pirow for trying to steer him away from South-west Africa. Not a word was said about Pirow's alternative plan. Pirow was told to go home—and wait. Pirow went, bitterly disappointed and angry. What had happened was that the Nazis were not at all certain that Pirow's influence could keep South Africa neutral. Pirow was angry because he sensed that uncertainty. And it hurt his vanity.

When I saw Pirow in South Africa, after his return from Europe, I was warned that he would terminate the interview abruptly if I mentioned his trip. To this day Pirow has not publicly announced the reason for his meeting with Hitler and the Nazis. Before he arrived in Berlin he had seen Portugal's dictator, Salazar, and had proclaimed that they saw "eye to eye" on the defence of Southern Africa. Obviously, Pirow did not breathe a word to Salazar about the plan he was to present to Berlin. He had also talked with Belgian Government officials in Brussels, to whom, I learned, he had given assurances that the Belgian Congo would not be emphasized in his coming conversations with the Nazis.

Pirow is a huge, hulking man of German extraction. His eyes blink suspiciously behind his thick-lensed spectacles. He has a frightful temper, which he lets go like a petulant schoolboy on occasions. He hates informality, and I was advised to dress in a dark suit and white shirt for my interview. The way to get Pirow to talk, I was told by a friendly Johannesburg newspaperman, was to needle him with pointed questions until I saw him getting red around the neck. Then, if I was not thrown out on my ear, Pirow would say things he might later regret.

I was quite prepared to try it. And I started off with a question about German-South African trade. I asked Pirow if he thought that it was in South Africa's ultimate interests that the country should supply its manganese output to Germany. "Especially," I added, "since there is a widespread belief that the Reich is a potential enemy of the Union."

Pirow answered: "I do not hold the view that Germany is a potential enemy of South Africa. And in any case South Africa is free to conclude mutually beneficial trade treaties with any country. In return for South African manganese Germany sends goods of vital value to the Union."

The barter agreement between Germany and the Union had been criticized in Cape Town's political circles. The Press in South Africa, even the English-speaking newspapers, had kept quiet on the subject. Any mention of it calculated to stir public opinion against the export of

manganese to Germany would have proved unprofitable to the newspapers concerned. They would have lost some of their advertising, since advertisers with an interest in manganese mining would have objected. In these matters the Press in South Africa is always careful. For example, movies are never given unfavourable reviews in Union newspapers, lest the movie house withdraw its advertising.

Thus the South African public knew little or nothing about the Union's trade agreement with the Reich. In recent years the agreement had become distinctly one-sided. The railroads were equipped with German-built locomotives, passenger coaches and freight cars. The Union had lately been forced not only to accept considerably more railroad equipment than requirements demanded, but at prices higher than those in Britain. Additionally, the Union was forced to import German merchandise of singularly poor quality or render useless the credits in Berlin.

I pointed this out to Pirow. "Is it," I inquired of him, "what you would honestly call a mutually beneficial trade agreement?"

Pirow calmly linked his hands over his broad stomach. "It is," he said, rather patronizingly, "a matter of opinion. Germany has raised her prices because of the higher cost of production. Personally, I believe that Germany has played a big part in recent years in the development of South Africa."

I explained at some length the plight of the Balkan countries which had signed barter agreements with Germany. The Reich's indebtedness to them had made them nothing more than dumping-grounds for inferior German manufactured goods. Yugoslavia, for instance, having delivered wheat to Germany, was flooded with aspirin and harmonicas from Nazi-land.

"There's no danger of that in South Africa," Pirow said. "Germany doesn't treat her *friends* that way. Besides, we could always stop sending the manganese if it were to happen."

The fact was that South Africa, once tangled in the mesh of Nazi trade tricks, couldn't get out of the barter pact without suffering a financial loss which the Government, not the manganese mines, would have to take. For Germany had seen to it that she was always behind with her payments for the manganese, and that a cargo of Reich merchandise would never put in to a South African port until another delivery of manganese had arrived in Germany.

Although I kept my pledge not to mention Pirow's European trip, I did ask him if the return of the Nazis to Africa would be dangerous to the Union of South Africa. Pirow was direct in his answer. "No," he said, "the Nazis would be a great help to us. There are too many people in the Union who harbour silly ideas about the 'rightful freedom' of the natives. In the opinion of the majority, the day the Bantu gains his freedom will mark the end of white civilization on the African continent. The colour bar and all that it implies must be upheld at all costs. The Nazis, I know, would assist us."

"Mr. Pirow, do you believe in democracy?"

"I do not believe that irresponsible people should be permitted to endanger the national interests of South Africa."

"What does that mean?"

"I am referring particularly to individuals who would abolish much of our native legislation, who would damage our relations with certain foreign states, and who would have South Africa involved in war."

So far Pirow had been calm enough, and I had noticed no reddening of his neck.

"Some time ago," I remarked, "a certain editor in this country described Hitler as an 'international gangster' in an editorial. This drew a protest from Berlin, and consequently the Hertzog Government, presumably conforming with its policy of friendly relations with foreign countries, issued an apology to the German Government and ordered the editor to do the same. The editor refused, and as a result of political and business influences brought to bear on the newspaper's owners, he was dismissed from his post. Is that an example of South African democracy, Mr. Pirow?"

"Call it what you like," Pirow brusquely replied. "In my opinion the Government's action was perfectly justified." He glanced at his watch on his thick, hairy wrist. "One more question," he announced, "and then you must go."

"Would you some time in the future support demands for an Afrikaaner republic as you did before you became a member of the Fusion Government?" I asked.

Pirow rose, walked hurriedly to the door and held it open for me. "Such a question is preposterous and rude," he said. "You are challenging my honour."

Two weeks after the outbreak of war, Pirow, calling for the ousting of Smuts, declared that an Afrikaaner republic was "inevitable".

Like Malan, of whom he is profoundly jealous, Pirow held a Cabinet post in Hertzog's 1924-33 Government. He was Minister of Justice. He had a knack for publicity and appealed strongly to the Afrikaaners' traditional colour prejudice, when, in 1929, he led an attack with tear gas and bullets against native strikers in Durban. But this affair almost backfired him out of the Cabinet. What Pirow had done was to order a massacre. Durban's underpaid native dock labourers were creating trouble enough to inspire sporadic strikes and unrest among blacks in other areas of South Africa. And Pirow wanted to make an example of them.

He sent a small group of tax-collectors into Durban's native slums with orders to gather in all monies due for poll tax, dog tax and municipal rent. Pirow's motive was to bring the unrest to a head, so that it could be dealt with by force. When the natives resisted arrest, police and tax-collectors withdrew, and Pirow called out a military force of carefully picked Afrikaaners. At 5 a.m. a few days later, troops with fixed bayonets surrounded the native locations. The blacks were not yet awake. Pirow gave the order to advance; by noon of the same day the story of that bloody morning, with all its atrocity details, was common gossip. The troops had shot and bayoneted native men, women and children in their beds. The news spread to Cape Town and Johannesburg, where natives gathered together in angry little groups. Police guards outside the native locations were trebled.

The Government became alarmed and Pirow was quietly told that he



had gone too far. To appease protests from several public figures, including a prominent judge, the Government appointed a commission to investigate conditions of native workers in the towns.

Pirow was appointed Minister of Railways and Harbours by Hertzog's Fusion Government. He showed himself to be a good organizer. The finances of the state-owned railroads were in a shocking condition, but Pirow finished up by converting the deficit into a surplus. Hertzog promoted him, presenting him with the more important Ministry of Defence. And then Pirow decided to popularize himself. He piloted his own 'plane, drove his own high-powered automobile, scratched unmusically on a violin in his leisure moments, and in a fit of temper broke a Senator's leg in the House of Assembly.

He bid for the votes of Afrikaaners by emphasizing the demands of the Nazis in Africa, and to gain English-speaking votes and give "proof" of his loyalty to Britain he urged the organization of national defence. About the latter, however, he did practically nothing, as Smuts was later to discover. The South African Press was presented with an opportunity to expose Pirow's Fascism long before the war broke out, but political expediency made it impossible. During the 1938 elections he was scheduled to speak at a meeting of his United Party supporters in Durban. He arrived late, immediately excused himself, pleading important political business, and rushed out of the meeting-hall. Reporters trailed him to a secret meeting of Grayshirt and Malanite leaders. Editors killed the story, believing it would do irreparable damage to the United Party's chances of victory.

Pirow's ambition is almost boundless; he wants National Socialism for South Africa; he wants to be its Fuehrer; he wants a minimum of interference from Germany and none at all from Britain, and he wants to extend South Africa's borders as far north as possible. But, more than anything, Pirow wants to be head man. He would fight National Socialism if it were not of his making; he would be satisfied only with "Pirowism". He will never co-operate with Dr. Malan's Nationalists so long as Dr. Malan refuses to absorb them into Pirow's New Order Party. Malan is a positive danger to Pirow's ambitions.

Pirow hates the British as much as Malan does, but up to the outbreak of the Second World War he had not openly revealed his hatred. There was no doubt that he had hoped he would win the premiership on the votes of both Afrikaaners and Britons. His plan, it appeared, was to take power by democratic process and to introduce "Pirowism" gradually. The war, however, killed that plan. Pirow's great contempt for democracy is based on the fact that it has been too slow in promoting him. He has never had overwhelming support from Afrikaaners because they suspect him of these political ambitions and are not at all sure of his love for Afrikaanderdom. The back-veld Boers, especially, tend to despise him because of his love of modern life; the automobile and the aeroplane, the washing machine and the refrigerator are anti-God to the backward Boer. When Pirow flies in a 'plane, these Boers murmur, "He is not one of us."

Daniel Francis Malan is one of the few forms of political life in South Africa that has constantly and openly followed a policy of Afrikaaner republicanism. He started life as a *predikant* of the Dutch Reformed Church. He preached temperance in a Boer wine-growing district, but

the Boers listened and learned to respect him, even love him. After a while he turned his pulpit into a political soap-box, joined Hertzog in the fight against the pro-British attitude of Smuts and Botha. After the First World War Malan decided that the limitations of the pulpit cramped his style. He left the Church to edit a pro-Afrikaaner newspaper which was established to help Hertzog's struggle against the British Commonwealth. After a few years Malan became more violent than Hertzog, and when Hertzog temporarily dropped the fight for Afrikaaner independence in 1933-1939 Malan carried on alone.

Malan is a fanatic, pro-Nazi and an Afrikaaner Fascist, but he has a genuine affection for the Afrikaaner people—which is more than can be said for Pirow. It is possible that while Malan has the same kind of ambitions as Pirow, he might give up the leadership of his party if he honestly believed that someone else could do a better job. Since the war, Malan has done all in his power to overthrow Smuts' Government. The Germans, he says, have every right to a place in the African sun, and South Africa has no business in trying to stop them.

Malan is a demagogue. He is full of political affectations and has no scruples about hitting his opponents below the belt. To a gathering of 20,000 Afrikaaners he said in 1941 that Smuts had "trodden in blood across the pages of South African history and has trodden underfoot the opportunity to unite Afrikaaners".

Malan is an anti-Semite because he finds anti-Semitism a valuable vote-getting weapon among the Afrikaaners. His audience roared with delight when he told it: "Smigly-Rydz declared war for Poland and Janowski Smutsowitz did the same for South Africa. If we remain linked with England the British connection will be no protection but a positive danger. We must say: 'Away with Britain—we want a republic!'"

Malan has a theory; it is to disagree in principle with every and any action the Government takes. Before the war Malan's Nationalists were constantly harping on the Yellow Peril, emphasizing the Japanese danger to South Africa and urging the Government to repatriate all Japanese residents. The Japanese mean to invade South Africa some day Malan would say. In 1941 Gen. Smuts agreed that a Nipponese invasion was a distinct possibility. Malan sneeringly dismissed it as propaganda designed to involve South Africa more deeply in the war. His followers worked on a kind of Malan-Mikado alliance theme after the Japanese entered the war. They conveniently forgot the Yellow Peril line and proved to their satisfaction that the Japanese were out merely to crush the Red Menace—which, after all, was Afrikaanderdom's aim as well.

This unclever twist in Malan's political line immediately brought to mind the fact that he had once pretended to be an enthusiastic supporter of the Russian Bolsheviks. In 1913 he had published a thirty-page booklet on Socialism in which he declared that Karl Marx possessed "a ability, learning and literary power placing him in the front rank of economists". But it was only Malan the opportunist practising his political theory. Smuts and Botha were dead set against Communism. That is why Malan was for it. In 1920 he said: "The Bolshevik stand for freedom, and so does the Nationalist Party." Malan

opponents could easily catch him off guard by agreeing with any one of his views.

For all his fanaticism Malan is not an honest man; he is first a politician who will use any weapon intellectually to smear his opponents. He never spars with his enemies or wins a point by astute argument, but he infuriates them by his insults and blandness. He asserts that there is "no proof at all" of religious intolerance in German Europe despite the abundant evidence of Nazi persecution of religious groups. Malan uses Hitler's technique: tell a lie often enough, and the ignorant masses will ultimately believe it—especially the back-veld Boers.

Pale-faced and spectacled, Malan is not a colourful character. He is grim and lacks personality; there are few pictures of him in which he cracks a smile. He has never been known to make a joke. He is a strict teetotaller and eats frugally. He dresses conservatively, even shabbily. If he were otherwise—and he knows it damn' well—his support from the Afrikaaners would fall off. They would not tolerate a representative who liked to eat well and live comfortably. Ruggedness and a loathing for progress is what counts with the Afrikaaners.

"Wait till the Allies win the war," a South African said to me in 1942, "then you'll see Malan squirm; then you'll see his star fade."

But Malan is cleverer than that. Afrikaanerdom, he'll say, deserves the freedom for which young Afrikaaners so gallantly fought on the battlefields of North Africa. And the trouble is that he might easily get away with it among his followers.

## VII

### THE AFRIKAANER FIFTH COLUMN

SOUTH AFRICA'S FIFTH COLUMN IS SUCH AN ALARMINGLY LARGE SLICE OF the Afrikaaner population that it can afford to operate openly in all but its acts of military sabotage. There is no sense in trying to play down its importance. It is frankly capable of starting a civil war. And what civil war would do to South Africa and the Allied supply routes to Russia and India is almost too disturbing to contemplate. Even the "loyal" pro-British Afrikaaners who support Gen. Smuts might be tempted to join the "Rebels" in large numbers. There is hardly an Afrikaaner who does not in his heart hope for a free republic, whether he agrees with extremist methods of establishing it or not. Many a "loyal" Afrikaaner would feel strangely out of place fighting beside the British against his own kind. The picture is not overdrawn. The United Party in September, 1939, was split from top to bottom when the issue between war and neutrality was joined. It could happen again on the issue of civil war.

Civil war would immediately inspire a revolt of the Germans in South-west Africa. The "Rebels" in the Union, already entrenched in the police force and the civil service, could hamper, perhaps decisively, attempts by the "Loyalists" to restore order. Allied shipping lanes

round the Cape of Good Hope would be critically endangered. Cape Town and the East Coast ports, even in the hands of the "Loyalists", would no longer be a safe haven for United Nations vessels. And finally, the circumstances would be almost perfect for an attempted invasion of Southern Africa by the Japanese.

What is the Smuts Government doing about it? A fifth column is a constant danger, and in any other Allied country the authorities would take swift and ruthless steps to exterminate it. The Smuts Government, however, would be foolish to use such tactics. The fifth column is so large that a nation-wide attempt to smash it might easily provoke precisely that civil war which holds such grave dangers. If possible, the issue must never be joined. Smuts has been moving warily, taking a stab here and there at the country's most dangerous elements. Arrests have been made for sabotage. But it is impossible to strike out against subversive propaganda, because it is part and parcel of South Africa's politics. The politician who raises a cry for peace and an Afrikaaner republic and calls for the overthrow of the Smuts Government is not actually a fifth columnist. He is merely a phenomenon peculiar to South Africa. Any breach of his "rights", to say these things—that is, to attempt to force the Government to make peace with Germany—would be countered by such an outcry that the Government would never dream of arresting him.

Personalities govern South Africa's political destiny more than anything else. It is just as true with the South African fifth column. Disputes among its leaders threaten to weaken it, to break it into several smaller fifth columns. That is what the Government counts on, and to some extent it has not been disappointed.

The heart of the fifth column in the Union of South Africa is the Ossewa Brandwag (Sentinels of the Ox Wagon). It is an exclusively Afrikaaner organization with an estimated 250,000 members and probably twice that number of sympathizers. Its members greet their leaders with an upraised right arm and shouts of "*Oms bring hulde!*"—meaning "We pay homage". It has a secret army of "*Stormjaers*"—Stormtroopers—some of whom have been convicted for high treason. It runs its own Gestapo-like intelligence service, and has organized makeshift armament factories.

The Ossewa Brandwag's declared purpose is an Afrikaaner republic. It is willing to create it by constitutional means—if that is possible; if not, by revolution. It plans to make life so unpleasant and restricted for South Africa's English-speaking people that they will be induced to quit the country. Its political programme is frankly totalitarian. "It is not democratic," one of its leaders said in 1942. "Members of the Ossewa Brandwag are the Stormtroopers of Afrikaanerdom."

After the outbreak of war in 1939 the Ossewa Brandwag decided to take economic action against "foreigners". It told the Afrikaaners that the Briton and the Jew had pushed them out of the trades, commerce and industry. It urged a boycott against all British- and Jewish-owned stores. Afrikaaner stores were set up to compete against both. They were identified by the organization's sign. The Ossewa Brandwag issued an Afrikaaners' "buying guide" which listed about 1,000 Afrikaaner stores, and some months later another was printed containing more than 2,000 Afrikaaner business concerns.

In the Union's large towns the boycott was not felt, but in the rural areas, where stores are almost wholly owned by English-speaking peoples, the Ossewa Brandwag's campaign was successful to a large extent. Numbers of British and Jewish storekeepers either went out of business or moved to the cities.

Such a sweeping offensive against "foreign" business interests could not have been accomplished without funds. A handful of wealthy capitalists, a group of South African Fritz Thyssens, financed it. Impressed by the Ossewa Brandwag's phenomenal growth, they saw in its economic programme an opportunity to mobilize Afrikaaner buying power. A safe investment was seen in the financing of hundreds of Afrikaans stores which the Ossewa Brandwag's leaders urged Afrikaaners to patronize. Before long the capitalists had secured a large measure of control of the Ossewa Brandwag. Rank-and-file members who were aware of it accepted it as a necessary evil. But the vast majority of members were ignorant of the Ossewa Brandwag's financial backing, believing that its operations were made possible by their own individual contributions.

The Ossewa Brandwag's secret service in the Government Departments is no schoolboys' outfit. It is as meticulous and treacherous as the Gestapo, which it uses as its guide. Legally, Ossewa Brandwag members are forbidden to hold civil service positions, but they are there nevertheless—anxiously awaiting the day when they expect to hand over the Government machinery to the "Stormtroopers of Afrikaanderdom".

Instructions to the Ossewa Brandwag's secret agents in the Government's employ were issued as far back as 1941. They were contained in a circular marked "Strictly Confidential" which fell into the hands of the authorities.

It said: "Even the members of your family circle must not know that you are a member of this division of the Ossewa Brandwag, and it is not necessary even to advertise that you are a member of the Ossewa Brandwag. The more secrecy you observe as regards your work, the better will be the results achieved. Keep your eyes and ears open and pretend on occasion to be stupid, so that people may not suspect that you are anxious to obtain information.

"No incident which may be regarded as persecution of our people is too insignificant to report. Supply us with the names, addresses and occupations of all Anglicized Afrikaaners, of all bitter and venomous Jews, of all English-speaking people—in fact, anybody who is against our people. Report to us what they do and what they say. Report all business houses which are anti-Afrikaans. Report any instructions or regulations issued by an unsympathetic Government to servants of the State, and say whether anything is being done or contemplated against the interests of our people.

"Report the name of any head of a State Department who is bitterly anti-Afrikaans or who is unsympathetic. State what they do and what they say. You must spy also on your fellow-members of the Ossewa Brandwag to find out which of them may be unfaithful, and if there are any who might become traitors to our cause. If any member of the Ossewa Brandwag does not behave himself, report him. If there are weak or inefficient officers, report them."

Spy reports to the Ossewa Brandwag's headquarters are transmitted in code. The spy signs all reports with his number.

The foundation for the Ossewa Brandwag's secret service was laid long before the war. Pretoria, seat of the South African Legislature, harboured hundreds of civil servants who in 1937 and 1938 were members of the Grayshirts, forerunner of the Ossewa Brandwag. One of their functions was to suppress Government espionage agents' reports which outlined Nazi activities in South-west Africa and Portuguese East Africa. The South African public had no confirmed word of these activities until early 1939. The Hertzog Government consistently denied knowledge of their existence, but in newspaper circles it was known that dossiers on Nazis in South-west Africa had reached Government Departments in 1937.

Dr. Malan and Oswald Pirow are today bidding for control of the Ossewa Brandwag. Pirow is a close associate of Dr. Van Rensburg, the Ossewa Brandwag's "Commandant-General". But the organization is apparently not willing to ally itself with any of the political parties. "We are above party politics," its leaders say.

Dr. Malan got himself into hot water over the Ossewa Brandwag in 1942. Many of his Herenigde Party members threatened him with desertion if he supported it in its present form. They complained that the Ossewa Brandwag might overwhelm the Herenigde Party, and, because it was so violent, might easily ruin the chances of an Afrikaaner republic. More truthfully, these Malanites were afraid that the Ossewa Brandwag would wreck the Herenigde Party's hopes for the leadership of such a republic.

But there were others in Dr. Malan's party who believed in all-out co-operation with the Ossewa Brandwag. Most of these were members of the Ossewa Brandwag themselves. Dr. Malan was in a spot. Opinion in the Ossewa Brandwag on Malan was split two ways. Some would have welcomed him as their leader; others would have rejected him. There is no doubt that Malan would have liked to become the Ossewa Brandwag's leader. But if he was to fail in his bid, the Herenigde Party would disown him and seek a new chief. So Malan played a moderate game, throwing the Ossewa Brandwag a bouquet now and then, but sticking conservatively to the "evolutionary" republican policy of his party.

Subsequently Malan thanked his stars that he had not come out into the open as a candidate for the Ossewa Brandwag's leadership. The Government, in February, 1942, arrested 400 Johannesburg policemen and detectives, charging them with plotting to sabotage South Africa's war industries. The Government said that all the arrested men were Ossewa Brandwag members. The Government indicated that the Railways and Harbours Administration and other Government Departments were to be combed for traitors.

A few days later, pylons carrying electric power lines from the Victoria Falls, in Rhodesia, to the Witwatersrand gold-mining district were destroyed by saboteurs. It was one of many acts of sabotage that had been committed since September, 1939.

The Dominions Office in London announced that it had been the work of Nazi agents operating from Lourenço Marques, Portuguese East Africa. It added that Dr. Malan had denied that his Herenigde Party had any connection with the saboteurs. The Dominions Office did not

Say whether it had accepted Malan's repudiation, or whether the Ossewa Brandwag had assisted the Nazis.

Two hundred of the arrested policemen were subsequently released, 151 were detained and forty-eight were brought to trial on charges of high treason. It had been known for years that South Africa's police force was a hotbed of Fascists. During the Munich crisis the police behaved in an extraordinary manner towards groups of citizens who had gathered to protest against Chamberlain's appeasement policy. While crowds of Grayshirts were left unmolested, the police broke up meetings of anti-Fascists and anti-appeasers. Strange, too, was their policy concerning a certain pro-Nazi Afrikaaner newspaper in Johannesburg. The newspaper's offices were guarded by a group of Grayshirts. An angry crowd threw stones at the windows. The Grayshirts charged, hitting skulls with police truncheons, which were the property of the city.

Next morning a Johannesburg police sergeant was asked why uniformed police had not been sent to protect the building. "I knew my boys were there unofficially," was his reply.

The treason trial was opened by the Government in June, 1942. The prosecutor said that the evidence revealed that the *Stormjaers* were part of a secret army of the Ossewa Brandwag, which aimed at overthrowing the Government. Factories had been established, he said, to manufacture bombs and hand grenades. Efforts to contact Nazi spies had been made in order to get further arms for a military *coup d'état*. The defendants had helped interned comrades to escape. Secret documents concerning the disposition of shipping in South Africa's ports had been found in their possession. Government witnesses disclosed that the *Stormjaers* were organized into several battalions. A battalion comprised four companies, each commanded by a captain.

A former *Stormjaer* admitted that he belonged to the 12th Battalion and had later become a lieutenant. He attended a military camp where he had been taught to hurl hand grenades. When he took the oath of allegiance to the *Stormjaers*, he said, an officer melodramatically pressed a revolver to his chest.

A police detective related how he witnessed bayonet drill on a farm belonging to an officer of the South African defence force. There were 200 men on the farm, including a clergyman. They wore tin helmets, riding-breeches, and green shirts and ties.

The Union Government interned thousands of Germans when the war broke out. But members of the Nazi fifth column who did not make their escape to Portuguese East Africa went into hiding. Many of them with forged passports and birth certificates later changed their names and were given refuge by members of the Ossewa Brandwag. The Ossewa Brandwag's leaders have consistently denied that they have any ties, financial or political, with the Nazis. But they have brought no libel action against those who have accused them of it.

A young Nazi school-teacher, a member of the staff of a Johannesburg school for German children, told me before the war that even if South Africa did join Britain in a war against Germany, there would be ways to escape internment. "We have good friends in South Africa," he said confidentially, "friends in high-up places who will see to it that we are given an opportunity to be useful to the Fatherland."

The Ossewa Brandwag, Malan's Herenigde Party and Pirow's New Order Party all believe that they are acting shrewdly. If the Allies lose the war, an Afrikaaner republic would inevitably follow. Co-operation with the Axis powers would be the keystone of its foreign policy. (Some of Malan's M.P.s have already suggested that the Japanese are the Afrikaaner's friends.) All South Africa's anti-war, totalitarian parties and organizations naïvely believe that South Africa would be rewarded by the Nazis, that Hitler would permit the establishment of a free Afrikaaner state. Not until some months later would they find out their mistake.

And when the Allies have crushed the Axis, South Africa's Fascist parties will still demand an Afrikaaner republic. They will point piously to the Atlantic Charter as the basis for their demand.

## VIII

### THE SWOLLEN RIVER

MR. CHAMBERLAIN HAD FLOWN TO MUNICH, AND EVERYWHERE IN SOUTH Africa white people gathered in little groups to applaud and criticize him. At the mining town of Springs, along the Witwatersrand, a crowd on a sandy square listened to the speakers who had come from Johannesburg. When Hitler's name was mentioned they hissed and booed, and some of them hissed and booed at Chamberlain's name, too. But there was no fighting.

The audience grew as the evening progressed, and the speakers' voices became harsher and louder. And soon, above the loudness and harshness of their voices, they could hear the steady tramp, tramp, tramp of marching men. The crowd looked back and saw that the marching men were Grayshirts; they wore Stormtrooper uniforms with swastika armbands. Trucks with huge loudspeakers on them moved slowly in low gear behind the Grayshirts. A tall, lean-faced man with long arms and broad shoulders marched at the head of the column, swinging a truncheon. Suddenly he turned about, walked backwards and yelled out a command in Afrikaans. The column halted, and then the trucks drove up and took positions on the square. The Grayshirts were dismissed in military fashion and they gathered around the trucks. They moved quietly and they did not talk.

The citizens of Springs sullenly watched them. Their speakers appealed to them to pay attention and ignore the Grayshirts, but their voices were swamped in a mighty roar from the loudspeakers; the lean-faced Afrikaaner was gripping a microphone and he was shouting that the people of Czechoslovakia had committed terrible atrocities against the Sudeten Germans. And as he shouted more trucks drove up loaded with cheering Afrikaaners in civilian clothes. The Grayshirts stood rigidly with folded arms and legs apart, and the citizens of Springs did not look at them any more and turned to listen to their own speakers again.

The news quickly spread through the town that the Grayshirts had come. People left their homes and hurried towards the square. Some of them joined the Grayshirts' crowd and others joined their fellow-citizens.

And the Bantus of Springs began also to throng through the streets



to the square. They hung around, watching, some distance from the crowds. None of them would risk walking a step farther than the edge of the square because it was a white man's meeting.

The loudspeakers were vibrating and the Grayshirts roared their approval when Hitler's name was mentioned. Suddenly there was an angry shout from the crowd. The Grayshirts jerked round and some of them deployed and began to walk slowly towards the rival meeting. Somebody threw a stone, and that was the signal. The Afrikaaners with swastika armbands charged through the crowd and pulled the speakers from their platforms. The speakers fought back, but the Grayshirts kept coming and they beat the people of Springs with sticks and stones and with their fists.

The Bantus on the edge of the square looked on. They had heard of the Grayshirts; they recognized the swastika armbands. They had heard of Hitler. One of them stepped forward and shouted something in Zulu. The Bantus began to whisper among themselves and some of them shook their heads and moved off. But many of them stayed, and their black faces looked serious and disturbed. Their feet began to shift and shuffle in the sand. There were more than 200 of them standing there watching the white men fight.

They looked at one another searchingly, these Bantus, and they waited for a sign. Several of them took a few steps forward and they glanced behind them to see what the others would do. Their arms were held stiffly at their sides. Their faces twitched because they were so nervous. And then all of them stirred uneasily, and some of them ran. The Bantus who were running looked back again to see the others. And then all of them ran, and none of them looked back.

They ran towards the white men. They picked up stones, while running, and pounded the heads of the Grayshirts with them.

Then the white men stopped fighting among themselves.

Somebody shouted: "The dirty black bastards! What the hell are they doing!"

Then the men who loved Hitler and the men who hated him joined ranks. They turned on the Bantus and they fought them. And there was not a white man fighting a white man any more. For, Hitler or no Hitler, the Bantus had attacked white men. And the Bantus were black and South Africa was full of them.

South Africa is an uncomfortable place for the honest liberal because the Union's domestic politics are almost exclusively concerned with making the country safe for the white man. Such politics leave no room for liberalism. There are 6,000,000 Bantus in South Africa and only 2,000,000 whites; and the whites not unnaturally find it a problem—to which so far they have found no permanent solution. Consequently the black man in the Union is not a happy person; he is more repressed, less educated; he eats less and dies quicker than his cousins in any other part of Africa.

A prominent Johannesburg editor put it to me this way: "The blacks are like a great swollen river which threatens to overflow and wipe us out. If we want to keep South Africa a white man's country, we must build dykes to keep the river in check."

The dykes, which take the form of particularly oppressive legislation,

have been built higher every year because every year the Bantu has tended more and more to absorb the white man's civilization and to demand a greater share in its benefits. Many South Africans are properly shocked at Hitler's racial theories, especially at the legalized persecution of the Jews in Europe. But they are apparently too close to their own racial problems to detect similarities between their treatment of the Bantu and Hitler's of the Jew.

It would be wrong to say without reservation that South Africa's approach to the native problem is the same as that of Hitler towards the Jewish people. The South Africans have no intention of exterminating the Bantus. The broad basis of their native policy, however, is strikingly similar in many ways to the Nazi *transition* policy towards the "inferior" peoples of Europe. Hitler segregates the Jews in ghettos. The Union segregates the Bantus in "reserves"—areas of largely unfertile soil where they are expected to eke out a living and pay their taxes as well; in the urban areas they are crowded into "locations"—terrible slum districts railed off on the outskirts of towns and constantly patrolled by squads of police driving the dreaded "pick-up" vans.

The essential difference between the racial policies of South Africa and Germany is that the former *needs* the Bantu—needs him as an essential part of South Africa's abundant economy. All the heavy unskilled labour in South Africa is performed by the blacks. The reserves in the rural areas are gigantic reservoirs of black labour on which the whites can draw more or less as they please. All kinds of methods are employed to get the reluctant Bantu to toil for white South Africa. Only a few Bantus produce enough food on the reserves to feed themselves and their families—and to pay their £1 poll tax. And non-payment of taxes means imprisonment, fines, sometimes a flogging—and still the tax must eventually be paid.

The Bantu can work off his poll tax on the white man's farm or in the mines. Crop failures, droughts, foot-and-mouth disease and starvation frequently drive the native off the reserves to work for real money.

I once asked an official of the Department of Native Affairs why the Union did so little to alleviate the suffering of Bantus in the reserves during times of droughts and crop failures, and why there was no system of agricultural education which might teach the Bantu to irrigate his land and to produce more from it.

He said: "Quite simple. The mines want a continuous flow of labour. The 'boys' only work for a nine-month stretch. They're pretty well worked out by then. If you didn't find those conditions in the reserves, do you think the Bantu would ever want to work in the mines? If the native wasn't taxed and starved, we could never get him to build South Africa *for us!*"

The goldmines—the basis of South Africa's prosperity—employ about 450,000 natives who work for an average of twelve dollars a month under a nine-month contract. No white man in South Africa would work for such wages. And if it were not for the presence of cheap black labour drawn from the reserves on which the Bantu was supposed to have been segregated, the goldfields of the Witwatersrand would never have developed so rapidly to become the world's richest, and would never have proved so fabulously profitable.

Long ago South Africa was faced with the problem of deciding what *degree* of segregation should be imposed on the Bantu, and what restrictions should be made on immigration of whites from Europe. After all, if the blacks were to do all the labouring work on the farms and in the mines, there would be no need to import unskilled white labourers from Europe. But South Africa came to no decision on either question. The problems of segregation and white immigration were clumsily dealt with as they became acute. The white men came to South Africa and became bosses of black labour on the farms. Others arrived to find the blacks working at the jobs they could do.

And then another problem arose. The white bosses who could not make their farms pay and the white labourers who found themselves locked out of the labour market because of the blacks became the poor whites—thousands strong and crying out for further segregation of the blacks.

The Government slapped down restrictions on white immigration. Nobody could enter South Africa with less than £100 in his bank. But this did not solve the problem; it merely had the effect of partially arresting its growth. The mine-owners and other industrialists, the fruit-farmers and cattle-raisers were alarmed at the segregation movement. It threatened to deprive them of cheap black labour; it seemed likely to force them to employ white men and to pay them white men's wages, when a Bantu could do the job for less.

Every political party in South Africa began to develop a segregation policy. The Labour Party and trade-union movement advocated that the white settlers hand over to the Bantus sufficient land which could be developed according to the ancient tribal custom of communal ownership. They stated that the white man should not take advantage of the vast supplies of black labour, and should build South Africa without its help. That was pure segregation—inspired, of course, by a desire to widen the scope of the white settler and to build strong, exclusively white trade unions.

To strike a compromise between the trade unions and the industrialists, the Government under General Hertzog introduced the Colour Bar Bill, designed to protect the white labourer against competition of the native in industry. The blacks were to be excluded from certain classes of work, principally the mechanical trades, merely on grounds of their racial origin.

It was one of the most hotly disputed pieces of legislation ever to pass the Cape Town Parliament. Not that the protests were loud on behalf of the native. Quite the contrary. The trade unions complained bitterly that the Act did not go far enough. The industrialists, fearing a rising wage bill, trembled over the resultant high cost of production and added piously that the legislation was unjust to the blacks. General Hertzog promised the industrialists that the Act would be put into operation only in the goldmines, where already a colour bar prevailed by custom but not by legal enactment.

The natives, facing the prospect of widespread unemployment, contributed to the debate by threatening strike action. Special squads of police and troops were rushed to the affected areas. The Bantu industrial worker was justifiably fearful of the Bill's implications, because it threatened to force him on to the already overcrowded reserves—"Black Ghettos", as he had learned to call them.

Significantly, the only white body that sprang to the defence of the Bantu was the Christian Church. Individual whites who championed the natives' cause were dismissed as weak-minded "Kaffir-lovers". Prominent members of the clergy protested that General Hertzog was depriving the Bantu of his "fundamental rights", adding that if the white man could not maintain his superiority by "character and ability, legislation such as the Colour Bar Bill certainly would not maintain it".

General Hertzog was startled by the protest of the Church. He had hoped and believed that the Bill could be passed without any serious bickering among the whites. He felt that he could handle the differences of the trade unions and the employers, that purely Bantu protests could be subdued by armed force. Certainly he was no man to be intimidated by the Church. It was too much to have to bear. And General Hertzog, to the amazement of the world, lost his temper and attacked the Church with such vehemence that in any other country he would have been forced to relinquish his premiership.

He said: "If there is one thing we can thank God for, it is that we are not governed by the Churches." He declared that the Archbishop of Cape Town and leaders of the missionary societies who had presented a memorandum of protest were "liars, slanderers, traducers and busy-bodies". Referring to the Bill, he declared: "I do not know whether the claim to perform certain skilled labour in connection with the mines and machinery is a fundamental right. But if it is, then it certainly is the intention of the Bill to give the Government power to take away such rights from the natives."

General Hertzog, his face reddening with rage as he stamped the floor of the South African Parliament, rounded off his attack with the allegation that the people of South Africa looked upon the missionaries as a contemptible class of persons who should not be allowed in the country.

The trade unions and industrialists hastened to dissociate themselves from General Hertzog's views. A labour leader to whom I spoke in Johannesburg in 1938 said:

"We all knew that the old boy had gone too far. But we wanted the Bill passed. We never trusted Hertzog for a moment. We considered him a Fascist even in those days. But we used him to get the Bill through Parliament. What can you do when the whites are being thrown out of work simply because the blacks will work for less?"

I suggested that the trade unions might admit skilled Bantus to their ranks and demand a standard wage scale for whites and blacks alike. I pointed out that this would prevent the Bantu from becoming unemployed and forced back into the Black Ghettos, only to produce another problem for South Africa.

"Try it!" he said scornfully. "Just try it! South Africa is a white man's country, and we've got to keep it that way. You'll never get a white man to fraternize with a Kaffir—not in this country you won't!"

The passage of the Colour Bar Bill was not followed immediately by the wholesale dismissal of Bantu skilled and semi-skilled workers. The transfer of their jobs into white hands was necessarily gradual, lest it adversely affect the national economy. Some of the leading industrialists and members of the retail trades were quick to redefine what constituted skilled labour. They were not anxious to fire the Bantu and to hire

whites, which perhaps would treble their wage bill. They therefore maintained to the infuriated trade unions that certain classes of work done by Bantus could not be classed as skilled even though they were popularly considered as such before enactment of the Bill.

In many instances industry was forced to yield to the pressure of the unions and the public at large. Business men complained heatedly that while they were accused of classing skilled work done by Bantus as unskilled, the trade unions were pressing for the dismissal of natives whose work was definitely *unskilled*, in order to find work for their members. In Johannesburg, for instance, a large department store insisted that the drivers of its delivery vans were unskilled workers. The drivers happened to be whites. The department store dismissed them, because their union permitted them only to *drive* the vans—not to carry packages from the store to the van, and from the van to the customers' homes. Bantus were hired, and were naturally willing to drive the vans, load them and unload them, for a wage slightly less than half that of the white workers.

Even worse, at the time the Bill was passed many poor whites were doing unskilled labour shoulder to shoulder with natives. The poor whites were naturally impressed with a Bill that kept Bantu competition out of the skilled trades, and popular prejudice placed a stigma on the white workers who did unskilled "Kaffir work". The poor whites therefore left their jobs and sought work in the skilled trades. Thousands of them have been unemployed ever since—and they resolutely refuse to seek work commonly performed by Bantus. The same thing occurred in some of the semi-skilled trades.

The result was that the Colour Bar Bill actually helped to increase unemployment among the whites rather than decrease it, which was its fundamental purpose. Today thousands of Bantus are employed on jobs that ten years ago would have been done by white men. Poor-white indignation against the Government and the blacks was so strong that a few years after enactment of the Bill the Cape Town Parliament was urged to rush through additional legislation designed to deprive the Bantu from working at *any* job, skilled or unskilled, hitherto done by whites.

The Government, refusing to widen the scope of the Colour Bar Bill, nevertheless decided to show South Africa just what the existing legislation could accomplish. It dismissed 17,000 Bantus from the state-owned railroads, and paid the newly employed white man a minimum wage of what amounted to 200 per cent above that paid to the Bantus. All municipalities throughout the Union were urged to employ white labour wherever possible. And the Government subsidized municipalities which replaced native workers by whites. The Government reckoned that this was a good example for private employers to follow. Indeed, it was greatly appreciated by the South African workers, and public opinion soon forced changes in the hiring policies of many employers.

The Government's example would have been even more successful had some provision been made for the thousands of natives who suddenly found themselves unemployed, unable to feed their families or pay their rent and poll tax. But the main purpose of the Government's example had been achieved. The poor-white population, 500,000 strong, had been appeased—if only temporarily.

South Africa's demands for greater measures of native segregation and for an effective colour bar which would prevent the Bantu from achieving near-equality with the white appear to be based largely on *fear*. Most intelligent South Africans to whom I spoke readily admitted that fear of the Bantu—fear of his numbers and potential power in the political and economic spheres—was the motive behind every attempt to “solve” the native problem.

A professor at the Witwatersrand University, a man who had spent his life studying the history of the impact of white civilization on South Africa, said to me:

“The very fact that our dealings with the Bantu have been so ruthless, so terribly unintelligent, indicates that they must be based on fear. The Colour Bar Bill didn't have a chance of success, because it was not only unfair to the native; if the white man really wanted to keep the Bantu out of the trades, *it was not drastic enough*. The Bill was inspired by the suggestion that the blacks were increasing at such a rate that it carried with it the threat of ultimate extinction of the white race in South Africa. Some of the Bill's supporters even went so far as to calculate that when the native population had reached a total of 200,000,000, the European population would only number 25,000,000. That was pure poppycock, because the death-rate among Bantu babies is extraordinarily high. But if they believe that, the Colour Bar Bill was a weak half-measure. Until we lift our restrictions on white immigration we shall always be outnumbered by the Bantus. Colour Bar Bills and segregation policies can't keep 7,000,000 people down for very long. If we don't accept *that*, then we would be more honest with ourselves if we killed half of them off!”

That, by the way, is a minority view in South Africa. If I named the professor, his students would tar and feather him. It is not difficult to pin down an average South African in a discussion on the native problem. When confronted with documented evidence of his country's treatment of the Bantu, he usually admits that it is severe. But the suggestion that it is unfair, besides, is met unfalteringly with the rationalization that it is basically a white-black struggle for supremacy in South Africa—and that the whites are determined to win, by hook or by crook.

Added to this, it is frequently suggested that not only is the Bantu racially inferior because of his colour, but that he is incapable of human progress because of his limited intelligence and brain-power. Racial theorists, anxious to defend and rationalize the Bantu's treatment under white man's rule, have stated that the Bantu's brain cell is small and badly formed. They are, it is said, less sensitive to pain and humiliation, and altogether emotionally less developed than the white man.

Even officials in high positions believe that. Up in Kenya—the only British colony in Africa where the public attitude towards the native approaches that of the Dominion of South Africa—the colonial administration was some years ago charged with cruelty to native strikers. An official inquiry was ordered. After some weeks, the official statement of the investigation stated: “Having given full consideration to the natives' state of civilization, the punishment administered was in no way excessive.”

Most South African writers seek to prove that the black man is inferior in every way to the white. They have written about the blacks

as though they were helpless children whom the great, big-hearted white man had taken it upon himself to protect. One of the worst offenders was a man named W. Basil Worsfold, a one-time editor of the *Johannesburg Star*, who in 1912 published a book called *The Union of South Africa*. Mr. Worsfold writes this about his visit to the De Beers mines in Kimberley:

Good medical attendance and the best of food are provided for the natives when they are ill. In reply to my inquiry, the nurse said they made good patients. In her own words, "They were not fidgety and did what they were told." I suggested that they were perhaps less sensitive to pain than Europeans, and this, she agreed, was undoubtedly the case. . . . Accidents, the nurse said, were generally the result of the "boys'" own carelessness, or, perhaps more rightly, of their want of intelligence in avoiding danger.

Mr. Worsfold is one of those people who cannot agree with the now accepted anthropological theory that backwardness among peoples is due mainly to their environment. He cannot even describe Bantu music and dancing without interjecting a few patronizing observations:

One boy was absorbed in producing sounds on a Kaffir "piano", a curious flat instrument, consisting of a succession of wooden bars with spaces between. By striking these bars with a stick, he did succeed in producing sounds, if not music. . . . Another group was dancing; that is to say, they stood in a circle chanting, moving their feet up and down, as though steadily moving the treadmill, whilst one among them made weird sounds on a concertina. . . . It is curious that these "boys"—grown men, it must be remembered—should possess so low an order of intelligence as to find a perennial source of enjoyment in such entertainment as this, and are yet capable of becoming really useful domestic servants and workmen.

This passage in Mr. Worsfold's volume was pointed out to me by a Bantu school-teacher. He thought that there was only one way to show up Mr. Worsfold's stupidity, and suggested that I write the following:

"One boy was absorbed in producing sounds on a European piano, a curious upright instrument, consisting of a succession of white and black ivory keys with no spaces between. By striking these keys with his fingers he did succeed in producing sounds, if not music. . . . Another group was dancing; that is to say, they walked around the room in pairs, stepping on each other's feet, twisting awkwardly at corners, as though they suspected they were being followed, whilst one among them made weird sounds on a violin. . . . It is curious that these grown men and women should possess so low an order of intelligence as to find a perennial source of enjoyment in such entertainment as this, and are yet capable of becoming really useful housewives and business men."

Sometimes the South African is quite honestly amazed at the amount of punishment a Bantu will take without any apparent desire for revenge. This, too, is attributed to his "insensitivity to pain". The South African finds it extremely difficult to look into the Bantu mind. Resentment and suspicion of the white man built up through the years are formidable barriers to overcome. But from talks I had with natives I learned that the desire for retaliation against punishment and injustice was strong, but that fear of further punishment was usually the deterrent to outright action. In the Orange Free State, a predominantly Afrikaaner province of the Union, a Zulu in his early thirties told me that individual acts of

revenge were, of course, worse than useless, and that collective revenge of the whole Bantu nation was the only thing to be hoped for. This Zulu was particularly bitter because he had once tried an individual act of revenge and had suffered the consequences.

He told me: "On a farm where I worked for two years, my wife stole some corn because our children were hungry. The farmer took my wife and whipped her and I set fire to the barn." He got two years on a road gang. His wife and children, he said, died of tuberculosis while he was away.

In South Africa the outnumbered white men not unnaturally fear cohabitation of white women with Bantus. A Bantu can be hanged for sleeping with a white woman—even though she may be willing. A white man can be fined for sleeping with a Bantu woman, but in most cases he gets away with it. A few years ago a case was brought before the South African Supreme Court concerning a white man and a native woman charged with "illicit intercourse". The white man's lawyer secured an acquittal for him on the grounds of insufficient evidence. *But the Bantu woman, who had no lawyer, was found guilty and sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment.*

Fear of commonplace inter-racial marriages is a political issue in the Union. During the 1938 general elections Dr. Malan's Nationalist Party told voters that if the Government served another term of office it would permit and even encourage mixed marriages. It was a propaganda campaign that hopelessly misfired. Even the most ardent supporters of the Nationalist Party found it impossible to believe that any South African Government would do such a thing. But to make its point more graphic the Nationalist Party issued a large poster, vividly revealing results to be expected from mixed marriages. It showed a Bantu and a white girl standing disconsolately at the door of a broken-down shack. Two children, one white and one black, stood next to them.

The English-speaking press denounced it as most unbecoming propaganda, adding that it was just what might be expected of the Nationalist Party. The pro-Fascist Afrikaans newspapers denied it was the work of the Nationalists and accused the Government of issuing the poster and spreading the rumour. There was at least one man who felt ashamed of himself: the artist who painted the poster. He attempted to commit suicide.

Today it is surprising how frank a South African politician, business man or farmer can be about the native problem if he is assured that you are conversing with him "off the record". He'll admit South Africa's unfairness in its dealings with blacks—even its brutality. But his conscience is quite unhurt *because he is sincere*. He explains that there is nothing to be ashamed of because every bit of legislation that has passed the Cape Town Parliament has bettered the white man's position. And he adds that South Africa has done nothing—absolutely nothing—*deliberately* to worsen the black man's position.

The native "reserve" system was established in 1894, but by 1913 it was found that the areas set aside were inadequate for the Bantu population, and that white farmers in the Cape, Transvaal and Natal had rented out or sold some of their lands to native cattle-raisers and share-



croppers. The Native Land Act of 1913 was passed ostensibly to relieve the overcrowding in the reserves by granting more land for native occupation. But, a rather cynical South African Senator told me, it was an Act that could have been more appropriately named the Non-Native Land Act.

"The main object of it," he said, "was to insure that the best and most fertile land went to the white farmer, and that industry wouldn't suffer labour shortages. You see, there were many poor-white farmers in all the provinces who had sold some of their land to native peasants. Gradually a lot of the best land had passed into the hands of Bantus, and we saw the prospect in a few years of the Bantu owning *all* the best land. That would never do. In time, South Africa would revert to a black man's country."

Thus the Native Land Act made it a criminal offence for any native to rent, buy or otherwise acquire any land outside the reserves. All natives who owned such land before the Act was passed were forced to give it up to its original owner. Any white farmer who sold or rented land to natives after 1913 was liable to a £100 fine or six months in gaol. Previously, the poor-white farmer had been more than willing to sell or rent some of his land to natives.

It was not the average South African farmer who had demanded the legislation. It was inspired solely by the industrialists and big land-owners. Both of them had found that the native refused to work on the big farms or in the mines so long as he could cultivate a piece of land that would raise enough crops to feed him and pay his poll tax. Obviously, if their means of livelihood were taken from them, they would be forced to work where the white man wanted them to.

As a result of the 1913 Act, 1,500,000 whites owned over 280,000,000 acres, while 4,700,000 blacks rented about 20,000,000 from the Government.

The cynical Senator volunteered that of course the areas allocated to the blacks were too small, and those in white hands were more than could be used. He explained: "The idea was to make the black man labour for the whites, and to dissipate any notion in his head that he possessed the same privileges of land purchase as his white master. In other words, the Act had a strong psychological angle."

But there were some in South Africa who saw the injustices in the Act. One of the Government Ministers, J. W. Sauer, who was in charge of it, said: "It would shake native confidence in Parliament for ever in the native mind." Others, less concerned by injustices to the natives, felt that the Land Act was a flimsy piece of legislation with no pretences as a permanent solution to native land problems. It was therefore decided to appoint a commission which would recommend additional land for Bantu ownership. In 1916 the commission recommended that 8,000,000 additional acres be set aside for Bantus who had been forced off their holdings by the Act. But the scheme was dropped because neither the Boers nor the natives would agree to the recommendations.

Twenty-four years later the Government, disturbed by the huge influx of natives into urban areas because of shocking conditions in the reserves, decided once again that something would have to be done about helping the landless Bantus. Loopholes in the 1913 Act had caused

abuses. Despite the prohibition on land transactions between blacks and whites, a proviso in the Act permitted it *under Government approval*.

Consequently, between 1913 and 1936 many white farmers demanded that certain land in Bantu hands should be taken from them because it was found to be more fertile than had been realized at first—and therefore “unsuitable for native ownership”. For some unknown reason the additional areas recommended by the 1916 Commission were not safeguarded by the Native Land Act at all. Local authorities were able to sell or rent land to natives in these additional areas. And the natives were allowed to enter into private deals with white farmers. Quite a number of unscrupulous whites swindled the Bantus out of their lands without any questions asked by the Government. To some extent the additional areas were the prey of speculators who bought up land at bargain prices from poor-white farmers and from natives in the full knowledge that the Government would have to purchase it for the natives some time in the future.

In 1936 the South African Government announced its intention of buying all land in the additional areas held by white landowners. And, of course, the inevitable happened. By popular consent the price of land soared. By 1938 the Government very properly had lost its temper. A member of the Public Accounts Committee in Cape Town observed wryly that it seemed obvious that the Government was buying £2,500,000 worth of land, and that it was going to pay £10,000,000 for it!

He gave a few examples of recent land purchases by the Government. A farm purchased in October, 1932, for £850 was sold to the Government for £6330. Another property valued at £75 by a land inspector in 1935 was bought for £598 in 1936. Another farm valued at £412 in 1935 was purchased by the Government for £2000 in 1937; while yet another bought for £510 in 1935 was sold eighteen months later to the state for £2892.

But while the Government announced that it would only pay “fair and reasonable” prices for land, there appeared to be no attempt to stop the inflation. My Senator explained that the Government would have been accused of championing the cause of the natives. As it was, there was considerable resentment among some farmers about having to give up their lands. It was felt that the high prices asked were a just compensation for having to clear off their property. A farmer in the Northern Transvaal said: “I arrived here in 1886 and helped to clean up the North to make it habitable for Europeans. We not only fought the natives for what we got, but we sacrificed life and property. Now the Government calmly comes along and hands over this hard-fought-for land to the natives on a grand scale. It’s a terrible blunder.”

The areas purchased by the Government were made available to natives overflowing from the congested reserves and locations in the urban areas. It was announced that purchase of these additional areas had settled the native land problem once and for all. But had it?

“What we mean, of course,” said the Senator, “is that we have at last sent back to the land all the natives who form a *surplus* to our labour supply. The landless native will fill our labour needs. We can always force more natives off their land if we find that we must have them back.”

## IX

## BLACK VOTES AND EDUCATION

SIX MILLION BANTUS IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE REPRESENTED BY THREE white members of the Cape Town House of Assembly. Additionally, four "British subjects of European descent" may be elected to the Senate. The Senate is a reviewing body, not a legislative one. And the Senators are bound to possess a minimum of £5000 worth of landed property.

This is how the whites in South Africa have sought to segregate the Bantus politically. There was a time when the natives of the Cape Province voted on equal terms with the whites. But General Hertzog took that privilege away in 1936 when he introduced a Bill to give the natives "alternative machinery by which their views on matters concerning themselves can be brought to the notice of Parliament". The main purpose of the Bill, of course, was to kill the Cape native franchise which had existed since 1853.

A roar of indignation followed the disclosure of Hertzog's plans. The natives protested. The Church of England protested. And the Liberal English Press spoke out against Hertzog, the *Manchester Guardian* observing: "Fear is a poor source of inspiration for statesmanship."

Dean Palmer, of Johannesburg, a great liberal, said to his congregation in February, 1936: "If you believe that the British Government made a mistake eighty years ago in giving the vote, with educational and financial qualifications, to the natives of the Cape, there is nothing more to be said; but if you believe with me that it is a crying shame that in face of the united opposition of the Christian Church of South Africa these people who have been paying taxes—and are paying taxes—should be deprived of this privilege, then you will join me in protest after the service."

The Dean's address in a crowded church hall dwelt on the un-Christian aspect of the proposed legislation. He emphasized that it was not a question of politics, but of "fundamental Christian ethics".

Supporters of Hertzog admitted that fear of black domination motivated the legislation. "The natives are children in relation to their white protectors," they said. And because they were children they were provided with a child's toy to compensate them. That toy was the Native Representative Council, comprising twenty-two members, made up as follows: The Secretary of Native Affairs as chairman, five whites, four Bantus appointed by the authorities, and twelve Bantus elected by natives.

The Native Representative Council is, as one Bantu member described it, "a dog that barks but has no teeth". It has no legislative powers. It is a purely advisory body. The four Bantu members appointed by the authorities are usually native chiefs recommended for their loyalty to the Government. Constitutionally, the twelve elected Bantus may outvote the other Council members, but it matters little whether they do or not.

Moreover, the authorities retained the right to dismiss from the Council all Bantus, appointed and elected, if they proved to be "unsuitable by reason of misconduct". Needless to say, the Council's functions fooled no one. But while its value to the Bantu population is

precisely nil, it serves a useful purpose for the Government. It is a fine sounding-board of native opinion. Unrest is brought to the Government's notice by the appointed and elected Bantu members.

The least offensive of South Africa's "alternative machinery" is to be found in the Transkei Native Reserves, where approximately 1,300,000 Bantus are represented by the "Bunga". The Bunga is the Transkei Native Council. The presiding officer is the White Chief Magistrate of the Transkei territories. The members consist of twenty-six white magistrates and eighty-two Bantu members. About one-third of the Bantus are nominated by the white authorities and two-thirds by the native population. The Bunga meets for three weeks each year. It is run along parliamentary lines, more or less, and is housed in an impressive, white-domed building at Umtata, chief town in the Transkei, which comprises an area of 16,352 square miles. The Bunga spends an average of £250,000 a year on the maintenance of the territories. This money is raised mainly by taxes, though the Government has made money grants from time to time.

The Bunga works well as far as it goes. The three-week session is conducted with impeccable parliamentary manners. There are no serious cleavages of opinion—at least, they are not openly expressed. The Bantu members appointed by the white authorities are usually mild fellows who are careful not to mention some of the grosser injustices in the territories. The Bantus elected by the natives themselves grumble constantly at the Bunga's lack of power. And the 1,300,000 native inhabitants of the Transkei have in recent years come to look upon the Bunga as nothing more than a brutally efficient taxing machine.

In short, the Bunga's usefulness is limited. The Native Representative Council is frankly farcical. And the Bantus' white Senators and Assemblymen—all sincerely interested in native welfare—are obviously ineffective. The Bantus in South Africa regard with envy the representation afforded to their fellow men in some of Britain's Crown colonies in Africa, where natives are appointed to *legislative* councils and thus play a very real part in the affairs of the colony. Even that system, the Bantus believe, could be improved upon. What is wanted is a more democratic process by which Bantus become members of Native Councils. Too many of them are chosen by the whites, and not enough of them by the democratic vote of their own people.

So long as the Bantu remains uneducated, the South Africans say, it is unthinkable to allow him to participate in ruling the country. No education—no votes. Which is fair enough if a country offers its people a real opportunity to educate themselves. But the public attitude in the Union, as reflected in the small sums allocated to native education, is that the educated Bantu is a menace. He threatens to pull down the white man's standard of living by attempting to nullify the colour bar.

Oswald Pirow used the prejudice against educated natives to good effect in the elections of 1938. He was asked during a campaign address whether he had learned that a Bantu had recently received an A.B. degree at the Witwatersrand University. Pirow didn't hesitate for a moment. "Yes, I have heard of it," he said, "and I think it's disgraceful."

His audience applauded him.

Some years ago E. A. Conroy, M.P. for the town of Hoopstad in the Orange Free State, delighted his constituency by a similarly prejudiced statement. He said: "I am totally opposed to the principle of educating the natives, for God has placed the blacks in South Africa to serve the whites."

These are not isolated expressions of opinion picked out to shock the reader. The final evidence of South Africa's attitude lies in the fact that more than eighty per cent of the Bantu population is illiterate. There are men who fight for native education, but they can be counted on the fingers of both hands. General Smuts is among them. His War Government increased the appropriations for native education in 1942. But twice one is still only two. Smuts has made a start, but he is hamstrung to a large extent by popular feeling.

White children in South Africa are educated free. The colour bar, of course, forbids the attendance of Bantu children at white schools. The Bantu has to pay school fees. He must buy his own books. Consequently, almost seventy-five per cent of the child population has never seen the inside of a class-room.

Conditions in native schools vary. In the Transvaal, for instance, they are worse than in the Cape Province. And in the Orange Free State they are far worse than in the Transvaal.

There are about 250,000 native children of school age in the Transvaal. But a little more than 50,000 of them go to school. In 1937 the Mayor of Johannesburg said that of the 90,000 children in the Johannesburg and Witwatersrand area, only about 18,000 were attending school. It was explained that it would cost £60,000 to build the Bantu schools that Johannesburg alone needed. And that was quite impossible, since the city would be faced with a loss, and it already suffered a deficit of £20,000 on its native revenue. It was pointed out that £169,000 was available for native education in the Transvaal. The Government boasts that at least £2 per head is spent annually for native education. But not in the Transvaal, apparently. Simple arithmetic reveals that £169,000 was made available for 250,000 children.

The Chief Inspector of Native Schools said in 1937 that the Transvaal Education Department did not wish municipalities to spend "tens of thousands of pounds" on native schools. On the other hand, he was quite prepared, he said, to permit Johannesburg to spend £1000 a year on the building and repair of schools. At this rate, he explained, there would be decent schools for all native children *in ten years*.

Two years previously an inspection of Transvaal Bantu school buildings had revealed, in the words of one inspector, "a decent farmer would hesitate to house his cattle in them".

At one school it was discovered that there were twelve teachers for more than 1000 children. Classes numbered from 100 to 250 children. Five classes were conducted simultaneously in one dilapidated shanty with no desks or benches.

At Pimville Location, Johannesburg, the native school consisted of five small corrugated-iron halls. There were 1250 pupils and twenty teachers. One of the halls held 373 children, ages ranging from six to eighteen.

The worst case of overcrowding was found in Alexandra Township,

Johannesburg, where 280 children were kept in a badly ventilated room under *one teacher*. Half of them were shouting out multiplication tables in massed voices, while the others were trying to read history books.

At a school in Orlando Township the inspectors saw nine children huddled together on benches constructed to hold four. The overflow sat on a concrete floor *and on the steps outside the building* trying to write on slates supported on their knees.

A year later the Transvaal Education Department decided that something would have to be done. Steps would be taken, it said, to make native education "more effective". The biggest problem, it pointed out, was the disgraceful overcrowding. There were no funds available for any expansion scheme. The only alternative was to reduce the number of pupils in each school.

Children below the age of seven and those over sixteen who had not completed the third grade were not permitted to attend school. Kindergartens don't exist for the Bantu child in South Africa. The Secretary of Education said: "This fixing of an entrance age is not in any way unfair when you bear in mind that the native child is rather more backward than the white child." The Education Department was thus able to fix the maximum quota of pupils allotted to one teacher at fifty. No money was spent on desks or benches. The "backward" native child was still housed in broken-down shacks the authorities called "school buildings". The child's parents still had to pay fees for his education.

Fortunately, a few responsible white people in South Africa do not believe that the Bantu child is basically backward. Dr. I. D. MacCrone, lecturer in psychology at the Witwatersrand University, has stated that results of native intelligence tests cannot justify any sweeping statements about the "innate mental inferiority of the blacks". He suggested that environment played a large part in the Bantu's life. To say such a thing in South Africa provokes widespread criticism. Dr. MacCrone was very courageous. He instanced the Chinese labourers who were brought to Hawaii in 1865. He said they were chosen for three qualifications: they were barefooted, knew no English, and they had calloused hands. In 1929 the intelligence of their grandchildren was investigated. There was no colour bar in Hawaii's schools. It was found that the Chinese children's intelligence was equal to that of the white children attending the same schools. That, Dr. MacCrone respectfully submitted, was how education *could* work.

Teachers' salaries today rarely exceed £4 per month. In 1931 Transvaal teachers' salaries were cut by approximately twenty per cent. At one end of the scale there was a case of a teacher with a wife and five children who received nineteen shillings and eightpence for a month's work; at the other end was the principal of a school of 750 pupils who drew in the same month £4 13s. 6d. plus allowances. The native teaching profession wasn't satisfied—and it said so. The Transvaal Education Department issued a circular to all Bantu teachers. It said that it was entitled to make still further reductions if it so wished, and the natives would have no redress.

The teachers wanted to know what had happened to the salary rises (five shillings for every completed five years of service) to which they were entitled. No answer. The teachers took action. They brought seven

test cases against the Transvaal Administration in respect of arrears in salary increases. These arrears dated back to 1928 in some cases. They affected over 1000 teachers and the sum involved was estimated at £40,000.

Six of the teachers won their cases. Formal application for increases piled up in the Education Department. The Transvaal Administration appealed to the Supreme Court. The lower court's judgment was reversed. The Administration breathed easier.

Hundreds of Bantu schools in South Africa are run by churches and missionaries. The authorities are nervous about it. The Transvaal Missionary Association, outlining its education policy, has said: "Native education should be of a kind—among other things—which will exercise wholesome pressure against unfair economic and other barriers, and so be a force of liberation. It should never be used merely to make the native content with the barriers set up against him. Native education must not be visualized as a means of making better farm labourers or better miners, but of enabling the native people to meet their own environment with greater intelligence and better equipment."

A Cabinet Minister in the pre-war Hertzog Government said to me in 1939: "The missionaries should be prosecuted under the Riotous Assemblies Act. They are really revolutionaries. They incite the natives to revolt."

A report of the Native Affairs Statutory Commission once urged the transfer of all missionary schools to the state. It charged the missionaries with preaching equality between natives and whites. It said: "The whole conception of parallel development with each race living harmoniously side by side must be dropped."

The Bantus are grateful for the missionaries' interest in their education. They do not want missionary schools transferred to the state. Government spokesmen have frequently charged that missionary enterprise in native education has led to active competition between different religious groups. They say that pupils have been offered a free education by missionaries on condition that they change schools. Teachers, it is said, are dismissed because they don't belong to the religious sect controlling the school concerned.

In the early days the missionary brought Christianity to the Bantus in a particularly violent form. They sought to undermine the entire system of tribal life. They were tactless; they inspired suspicion and resentment. They walked through the native villages, shocked, not at the appalling sanitary conditions, but because African maidens were immodest enough not to cover their breasts. An old native in Durban told me that he learned his first English words from a missionary. They were: "That is wicked."

This Bantu (he must have been over ninety) said: "The first white men I ever saw were English missionaries. They interrupted a wedding feast in my kraal. We were eating roast oxen and drinking Kaffir beer. Fifty young men were dancing round the fire. The missionaries shook their heads sorrowfully, and then marched up to the Chief and yelled at him. The Chief ordered them to be thrown out of the kraal, but they came back and started to pray. The Chief ignored them for a time, but they began to shout at the heavens. The Bantus looked at them, and

the missionaries tried to induce the Chief to kneel and pray, too. The Chief threw his mug of beer in their faces. The missionaries then got up and started to empty the big pots of beer. The Chief and his bodyguard drove them out of the kraal for the second time—at the points of their spears."

Today, of course, few missionaries are as primitive in their attempts to convert the native to Christianity. But theirs is an unenviable job. Although they are no longer subject to the proverbial pot-boiling of their predecessors, they have a hard time trying to convince the native that Christianity is not the exclusive preserve of the white man. Explaining the reasons for the colour bar, for instance, is a particularly painful process. If all men are equal under God, the Bantu says, the whites obviously don't believe it. Some missionaries hold up the white man as an example of true Christianity. This is a terrible mistake—and the Bantu frequently meets it with the suggestion that the missionary's work would perhaps be more productive if he spent a little time on South Africa's "white savages".

The Bantu wants to know why white Christians won't associate with black Christians, why the Dutch Reformed Church excludes natives from membership by an Act of Parliament, why white Christians play tennis on Sundays, why black Christians are kept out of the skilled trades, forced to live in slums and to go without food.

A goodly number of Bantus have concluded that Christianity is a gigantic fraud. A native professor said in 1926 that South Africa's "white brethren have not seen fit to put into practice the principles of Christianity about which they have boasted so much".

He added: "Let the white man say frankly that might was right and the natives would have no quarrel with him. But we object strongly when we are told that Christianity is the basis of native policy."

One of the greatest barriers the missionary has to overcome is embodied in an old Bantu slogan: "The white man had the Bible and we had the land: now we have the Bible and the white man has the land."

In recent years missionaries have become more and more the spokesmen for native grievances. Thus they have managed to knock down some of the old Bantu prejudices against them. The educated Bantu, for example, has appreciated missionary interest in South Africa's two native colleges, Lovedale and Fort Hare. Missionary societies have made scathing protests against official and unofficial attempts to close these native universities. But the missionaries still complain that in the last twenty years there has been an alarming decrease in their flocks. They attribute this to the fact that it is difficult to become a good Christian on an empty stomach.

The Rev. Ray E. Phillips, of the American Board of Missions in South Africa, has said: "No general and hearty response to the Christian appeal to high spiritual endeavour can be expected among a people living in a chronically insolvent state economically." He added: "The Kingdom of Heaven will come appreciably nearer realization in South Africa when men and women and little children, not of one race, but of all races, are given a free and adequate opportunity to live abundantly in every sphere of life."

Bantus in the cities often try to supplement their meagre incomes



by brewing illicit liquor, and by gambling. The missionaries naturally condemn it. But members of their flocks frequently find it impossible to provide sufficient food and clothing for their families after having paid money to the church and for the education of their children. A native woman in Johannesburg told me: "How can I live like a Christian on the £2 a month my husband earns? I can take in washing, but that doesn't help much. I am expected by the missionary to keep up a respectable home, to support the church and send my children to the mission school, for which I have to pay fees. All my friends are brewing Kaffir beer. They eat meat twice a week. But not me, I'm a Christian."

All in all, the missionaries in South Africa take a lot of punishment. They are generally fine men with infinite reserves of energy and patience. They should get much of the credit when the South Africans extend democracy to the natives.

## X

## MAN-HUNT IN JUNE

"WE START AT 3 A.M.," SAID THE CHIEF OF POLICE. "DRESS WARMLY; IT'LL be damn' cold. And if you've got a hunting-knife, take it with you. Some of them can turn nasty at that hour."

I was to take part in a man-hunt—a hunt through bush and over veld for Bantus who had failed to pay their taxes. Seventy thousand of them are rounded up and imprisoned every year for non-payment of their annual £1 poll tax. Thousands more are fined. And, when the tax defaulter is a young man, South African law may administer punishment with fifteen cuts of the cane. Native taxes are due in January, but no action against defaulters is taken until June.

Natives who are unable to pay their taxes make themselves scarce in June and July. In the cities they fear walking the streets lest a tax receipt should be demanded of them. But in the rural areas their chances of evading the hunters are small indeed. They keep to their kraals; they hide their cattle; and if they spot the hunters first the kraal is miraculously emptied of every living thing till the hunters move off. But there is no permanent escape from the tax-collector—unless they give up their homes and become fugitives.

The hunt took place near a small town in the Northern Transvaal. There were sixteen of us—ten policemen, including the chief, a mine recruiting agent, four Bantus and myself. The Bantus were in high spirits. They were good Bantus who had paid their taxes. Each of them had a list of ten blacks who they knew had not paid their taxes.

"I don't know what we'd do without them," the chief observed. "They make things much easier for us—and they're worth the price."

"What do you pay them?" I asked.

"They get two shillings and sixpence for every Kaffir they catch. On a good night they can make as much as two pounds—which is pretty good money for a Kaffir."

The recruiting agent was a hopeful fellow. For seven straight nights he had accompanied the police on their hunts.

"So far they've been as old as hell," he complained. "I'd get fired if I sent any of the old ones up to the mines. I've just looked over the lists. Tonight the prospects seem brighter. At least seven of them are under forty."

He was a stumpy, round-faced man, this recruiting agent. His job was to persuade natives to go up to Johannesburg and work in the mines. It was easy enough to persuade them to go when times were bad—when crops had failed and when their cattle had died because of droughts. But lately times hadn't been so hard, and the Bantus shook their heads and gave him a wide berth when they saw him approaching them.

The recruiting agent had waited anxiously for June, when the hunts would begin. His method was simple. When the tax-defaulting natives were brought before the Court he would offer to pay their fines if they would sign a nine-month contract to work in the mines. Natives who have no responsibilities, no families or cattle, usually prefer to take the whipping or serve a gaol sentence. But those who are threatened with the confiscation of their cattle or with the starvation of their families are frequently willing to go up to Johannesburg.

"What I like best," he gloated, "is to find a Kaffir who hasn't paid his taxes and who has three or four strapping young sons below the taxing age. I can sometimes get them all for the price of one fine. The Court usually co-operates by threatening to confiscate half their cattle. Then I step in and save the day. And they're damn' grateful, too."

We moved off down the dusty, silent street, out of the town, where the occasional flash of our torches was the only light that broke the darkness. The crickets were making an incredibly loud noise, and as long as we kept our voices low there was nothing to betray our presence. The Bantus led the party, and the Chief and I walked directly behind them.

Two miles out of the town we left the main road and made our way across the country to a small native village of thatched domed huts where the Chief suspected at least fifty Bantus hadn't paid their taxes, in addition to those on the list.

"We'll round 'em all up," said the Chief. "We'll take them back to town and examine them later in the morning."

"All of them?" I asked incredulously.

"All of them who can't show their tax receipts," the Chief replied. "And who the hell can find a tax receipt in the dark?"

"I don't understand," I muttered.

"Look—if you ask them to get their tax receipts they'll say that Tom, Dick or Harry is minding it for them, and that Tom, Dick or Harry is sleeping in another hut at the end of the village. If you let them go and get it they won't come back. I've only got ten policemen. We'd take all night checking up on ten natives, while the others would have bunked into the bush. And maybe the ten we checked up on really would have their receipts. No, there's only one way to do it. Take the lot of them. Tell them to bring their receipts with them. And we sort 'em out in the morning."

And so that was how it happened. We crept up on the village. Five policemen took up positions at strategic points. They fired their revolvers into the air. The rest of us marched down the line of huts, waking up the natives, most of whom were scared out of their lives. The

women screamed; the children wailed and cried—and the men cursed. When we left, thirty minutes later, there wasn't a man of taxable age left in the village. The Bantus with their list of tax-defaulters had found their victims and had bound them together to make sure they wouldn't make a dash for it. The others were ordered to march in double file back to the town. They were flanked by the armed policemen.

It was a good night for everybody—except the village natives. Next morning it was found that thirty-six out of the sixty-four natives had not paid their taxes. Two hours before the Court opened the recruiting agent had decided which of them he wanted for the mines. And all except three had agreed to his proposition. The Bantus who had taken part in the hunt had been paid off. And the Chief of Police was in conference with the local magistrate, who would later fine them, imprison them or order them whipped.

"I hope," said the recruiting agent, "he decides to fine the ones I've picked for the mines. I hope the Chief puts in a word for me. It's a shame—an awful shame—to whip them."

A few days later the Chief of Police decided to round up Kaffirs who had not paid their taxes and who lived as labourers on nearby farms. We drove out in the Chief's car.

"Du Toit will be furious if his 'boys' haven't got the money to pay." He laughed. "He's found it difficult to get labour this year, and he'll be harvesting soon. Last year he paid his 'boys' fines because he didn't want to lose them—but they ran away two weeks later, anyway."

Du Toit was an Afrikaaner farmer who lived ten miles outside the town. We found him sitting on his stoop, drinking coffee and chewing on a piece of biltong—which is tough, dried meat. When he saw us he scowled. He knew why the Chief was there. The Chief introduced us. Du Toit offered me a steaming mug of strong black coffee, and when the Chief said I'd been in Europe recently, he asked: "Does Hitler kick the Jews around?"

I told him with some elaboration that Hitler certainly did.

"Good. I hope he gets to Johannesburg. He has a job to do down there."

"To hell with Hitler and the Jews," said the Chief. "Where are your Kaffirs?"

Du Toit put his fingers in his mouth, looked at the Chief sideways for a moment, and then blew. The whistle brought the Bantus—six of them—running up towards the house. But when they saw the Chief sitting on the stoop they stopped dead and started to back away.

Du Toit shouted something in Afrikaans, and the 'boys' shuffled up obediently. The Chief asked them if they had tax receipts. They all shook their heads, but then they dug into their trousers pockets, bringing out £1 notes and some small change. They offered to pay their taxes—and their fines—then and there.

The Chief took the £1 notes and fined them each two days' wages. The fines were small because the Bantus said that they hadn't deliberately tried to evade the law, but the June deadline had merely slipped their memories.

After Du Toit had sent them back to work, I followed them and asked them why, since they had their tax money, they had been foolish enough to forget about paying it and so have to pay a fine in addition.

They all grinned from ear to ear. "Not foolish, *baas*," one of them replied. "We sensible. We walk ten miles to town to pay taxes. We away from farm two days—and *baas* no pay while we walk. Police fine us two days' wages. Not foolish; we no walk the ten miles."

It isn't often that the South African Press complains of the maltreatment of natives, but even some of the most conservative editors are sometimes disturbed by the stories that pour into their city rooms in June and July. And they never hesitate to report police brutality when they find it. South Africa's police force, ninety-nine per cent Afrikaans, is probably the most-criticized in the world. Its handling of natives, especially, lacks restraint—and even intelligence. Thus it was that one of the choicest stories of Afrikaaner police sadism was given big play in South Africa's Press.

Five stubborn old Bantus, who lived in a native settlement a few miles from Kroonstad, in the Orange Free State, adopted a determined attitude towards the tax-collector. Their ages ranged from fifty to sixty. The police warned them that if their poll taxes were still unpaid by a certain midnight, drastic action would be employed. The old Bantus explained that they had no money, that they had barely existed on the corn they had raised during the year, and that, anyway, they were far too old to be taxed. When the deadline came the police appeared. They routed the Bantus out of their beds, tied them together and forced them to walk five miles behind the pick-up van in the bitterly cold night air. They wore next to nothing. They spent the night in gaol without blankets, and in the morning they were brought before the magistrate. A magistrate will sometimes show leniency to old natives in dire circumstances who really haven't the money to pay their taxes. But not this one. He sentenced them to three months' imprisonment and confiscated two head of cattle each.

It was possible that this magistrate didn't have the facts of the case made clear to him by the prosecuting police sergeant. The circumstances of their arrest certainly were not known to him. Magistrates in native courts are terribly overworked. They have little time—even if they had the inclination—to weigh the pros and cons of a case. In Johannesburg, for instance, I have seen a white magistrate deal with thirty-four cases of tax violation in a two-hour session. Most of the Bantus are terrified of the court-room—and they frequently complain that the interpreter has misrepresented them.

In 1937 tax-collecting became so difficult that the Government announced that it was the result of underground agitation: The Communists were blamed. They must have been atrociously exploited, these agitators. The Communist Party of South Africa boasts about six white members and 100 black.

"The goodwill towards the payment of taxes," said Mr. Corbett, Commissioner for Inland Revenue, "is not as good as it was." He was right. Although Bantus don't object to paying their poll taxes if they have the money, they seem to resent being pulled out of their beds in the dead of night by the police. And sometimes they even wish their £1 notes could buy them a real, honest-to-goodness vote.

In recent years the poll tax has tended to become economically unsound. The 70,000 Bantus who default each year must be supported by the State.

Pointing this out, a former President of the Associations of Chambers of Commerce of South Africa—a Mr. Smith—said: "The present system of native taxation is an iniquitous business which, if not abolished, should be considerably reduced."

## XI

## LIVING AND DYING

HOW THE BLACK MAN LIVES AND DIES IN SOUTH AFRICA DOESN'T MAKE A charming story. And nobody, except the Union's official tourist bureau, tries to tell you that it does. I gathered the material for this chapter early in 1939. Competent authorities on native affairs told me that conditions had been on the down-grade since 1920. The war has not raised wages for the Bantu and has not cleaned up his slums. Whenever I write or speak about how the Bantu lives I get the feeling that what I am writing or saying is too incredible for others to believe. That is why I must at the outset reinforce this chapter with three statements from three different and highly respected sources.

The report of the Commission investigating tuberculosis in the Union: "The dwellings in the urban areas, with few exceptions, are a disgrace and the majority unfit for human habitation."

The report of the Economic and Wages Commission in 1932: "The rates of pay of the industrialized and detribalized natives living in the towns are so low that they and their families are inadequately fed, housed and clothed."

General Smuts in 1937: "The natives in this country are rotten with disease and are becoming a menace to civilization."

For several months I visited farms in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. Most of them were owned and run by Afrikaans farmers who employed anywhere from five to twelve Bantus and their families to help them. The farmer's permanent fear is that the natives will leave him to seek work in industry, where wage scales are higher. But the Government has gone far to protect the farmer on that score. It has legalized serfdom. Under the Act of 1932 every Bantu farm servant must give 180 days' work to his master each year—and on the days of his master's choice. Since the farmers are always bemoaning a labour shortage, they usually spread the term of service over the entire year, thus keeping the Bantu tied to the farm. The Bantu's family is held responsible for any breach of contract on the part of the servant.

The Bantu's wife and children may be held as hostages if he runs away. Breaking this law makes the black man liable to criminal prosecution and imprisonment, and, if he is under eighteen, he may be whipped. At the end of the contract period, which is determined by *verbal agreement* between the servant and his master, the Bantu dare not leave the farm without a written document signed by the farmer, permitting him to search for work elsewhere. In short, the Act has loopholes which enable the farmer to retain the Bantu almost indefinitely if he wants to. Quite frequently the Bantu will appeal to the police at the termination of the contract for permission to leave the farm. The farmer,

if labour is scarce, will merely tell the police that the contract still has so many days to run—and that the native is lying. The police, of course, believe the white man's story.

Sometimes the Bantu on the white man's farm is paid a regular wage, and sometimes he is not. It depends on the farmer and the prosperity of his farm. Every Bantu labourer, however, is provided with a plot of land on which he builds a hut, if the farmer has no quarters for him, grows corn and grazes his cattle. In cases where wages are paid, the farmer usually demands a rental amounting to about half of the produce derived from the labourer's plot.

The cattle-owning habit has always been the economic basis of native rural life. The farmer not unnaturally finds it a nuisance, since it is he who must find grazing-land on his farm for his servants' cattle. In vain the farmer has tried to persuade the native to sell his cattle and put the money in the bank. The Bantu considers that cattle is wealth. He knows its value and nobody can swindle him out of it. Money is something different. It slips through the fingers—and the white man's hands usually catch it.

It is over the cattle problem that the white man has often broken the contract with his servant—and thus the law. In times of labour shortage the farmer will hire a Bantu, no matter how many head of cattle he brings with him. But when labour is abundant the Bantu and his cattle may be dismissed, despite the contract, and the farmer will hire a native who has no cattle. The farmer's delight, of course, is a Bantu with no cattle and a large family. The family is added labour power—which works for no wages.

On the richest farms owned by the most liberal farmers wages run as high as £2 per month. The average, however, is fifteen shillings. Some of the worst conditions to be found on farms in Southern Africa are in the Orange Free State. One farm I visited employed five Bantu families, paying them each nine shillings per month. The farmer provided them each with 120 pounds of corn per month. One of the families consisted of two adults and five children. They lived in a one-room hut measuring ten by fourteen feet. They had no bedding or blankets. Straw, smelling to high heaven, was strewn over the wooden floor. The children were naked. They were thin and drawn, and two of them suffered from pussy sores on their faces and arms. The head of the family told me that they had never tasted fresh milk and that the farmer's corn allowance was sufficient only for three people. His wife, he said, was sick. She gave much of her own food to the children. She was exhausted after she had taken them 600 yards to a stagnant pool where she washed them. They spent most of the wages on bread and tea. They bought four-pennyworth of condensed milk, two pounds of sugar and a shilling's worth of meat per month.

Some months later, when I visited this family again, two of the children had died. "They just fell down and stopped breathing," the father told me. One of them had said a moment before he died: "I'm hungry." The other families on the same farm consisted of two adults with only one child each. They were little better off. But there were no deaths.

On some of the best farms I visited in the Orange Free State there were cases of disease and malnutrition among the Bantus. And in every

instance where I asked the question "Are you happy?" the native would look at me incredulously. Sometimes he was afraid to answer for fear of reprisals from the white *baas*, but when he did it was "No!"—shouted, not spoken.

There is no death penalty for the murder of a native by a white man. In 1935 an Afrikaans farmer in the Orange Free State killed one of his Bantu servants. He was fined £20—suspended for two years. It appeared that the native, aged fifty-five, had been disobedient. The Afrikaaner strung him up by his feet and whipped him with a sjambok—dried rhinoceros skin—for twenty minutes. He then went into the house for a meal, leaving the native hanging. Later he returned and whipped the native again. But the native didn't feel a thing. He had died.

The Carsten case was one of the most notorious ever brought before a South African court. Nicholas Carsten, a farmer, was asked by one of his labourers, aged sixty, for his wages. The native's service contract had expired. Carsten refused to give him the money or to allow him to leave the farm. Instead, he hit him savagely. The next day the old Bantu left for Lichtenburg, the nearest town, to lay a charge of assault against his employer. Carsten followed him in his car, caught him and flogged him. He tied his hands behind his back, dragged him back to the farm, where he strung him up and flogged him again. The same day Carsten thrashed a Bantu woman who refused to give up one of her cooking-pots that Carsten wanted. The woman ran into the house to seek protection from Carsten's wife. But Carsten caught her and thrashed her once more.

The doctor who gave evidence said that the old native was so bruised he was "hardly able to stand". The woman's body, he said, was covered with welts and bruises.

Carsten's defence was that the natives were "disobedient and cheeky" and he "lost his temper".

*Carsten was fined £15.*

The farmers have done more to accentuate the deplorably bad relations between the blacks and whites than any other group in South Africa. Native labourers in the Cape province are better off than those in other parts of the Union. But even there a South African economist, conducting an inquiry into the "economic status of the Cape farm native", said that the question provoked by an examination of conditions on the farms seemed to be not "why do natives leave the farms?" but "why do they leave the farms as slowly as the available statistics reveal they do?"

Life in the reserves, with all its restrictions, is what the Bantu nevertheless longs for. Here at least they may till their own soil. Here at least they are not forced to labour for the white *baas*. The standard of living is higher than on the farms, except in times of drought. Between 1933, the year of a widespread famine, and 1936 the natives in the Transkei reserve, Natal and Transvaal suffered terribly. Tuberculosis claimed thousands. In the lowlands, where humid mists encourage the natives to herd together at night to keep warm, whole families were wiped out. Nearly everyone went hungry. In some districts natives bragged to the police that they hadn't paid their poll tax, hoping they would get arrested and sent to gaol, where they would get something to eat.

The Transvaal Chamber of Mines donates £50 per year to the relief of distressed natives. The donations started in 1933. In that year mine recruiting agents did a roaring business with Bantus whose cattle had died and whose families were destitute. One of the Chamber's chief problems—that of labour supply—was temporarily solved. In 1933 nearly twice as many Bantus flocked to the goldmines in search of work as in the previous year. And at the 1933 annual meeting of the Native Recruiting Corporation the chairman told the members that distress among the natives continued unabated and that the labour supply in the mines was sufficient to cover current needs.

The chairman, however, wisely warned against complacency. One could hardly expect such a highly satisfactory situation to go on indefinitely. He said that the advent of good rains in the native territories would result in a greatly augmented rush of Bantus from the mines back to their homes. In short, when the rains came the mines could expect a labour shortage—and recruiting agents would have to redouble their efforts.

A mining man once told me that the Bantu turns to the mines "as a proof of his manhood". But history seems to have proved that the majority of natives turn to the mines only in times of depressed economic conditions. The Bantu is not badly treated in the mines; in fact, the best conditions of work and highest wages in all South Africa are to be found along the fabulously rich Witwatersrand. Industrialists have learned that a well-fed, well-housed, healthy Bantu is essential to the efficient operation of the mines.

But nothing apparently can convince the Bantu that working deep down in the earth's bowels is a particularly pleasant way to earn a living. He is afraid of a violent death from a rock-fall. He is afraid of a slow death from disease. And although he can make up to £5 or £6 per month, pressure still has to be put on him by the rather slick talk of a recruiting agent. About 3000 Bantus die every year from diseases contracted in the mines, and from accidents. Their families get no compensation unless they can prove that death was due to the employer's negligence.

The mines never publish the names of deceased black workers. Dependants back home on the reserves may wait months before they learn, perhaps only by accident, that their breadwinner is dead. The mining companies pay out about £12,000 a year to the dependants of *white* miners killed at work. Additionally, the Chamber of Mines maintains several sanatoriums for whites suffering from mining diseases.

Members of the Zulu tribe seem to be the mines' biggest source of labour. Generally speaking, they are the strongest, tallest, bravest and proudest natives in all Africa. They stand up to mine work—sometimes 6000 feet underground and knee-deep in water—better than the others. While the mines seek to maintain the best conditions of service possible, the work is extremely arduous and lops years off the native's life. The Bantus usually work an eleven-hour day in the mines. They are paid by the hour, but they get nothing for the time it takes to get down into the mine. It may be an hour from the surface before he actually raises his pick.

Even the Zulus don't *like* working in the mines. Not one of the 100 Zulus to whom I put the question in Johannesburg said that he prefers



working in the mines to his land back in the reserves. About half of them said they worked because they knew they would be fed like fighting-cocks. Some said they wanted money to buy cattle. Others said they needed the cash to pay off debts and taxes. And a handful said they worked to impress their womenfolk, for whom they would buy dresses and trinkets.

In the urban areas natives live in locations—overcrowded slum districts which inspire the kind of official comment mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. These locations are set well away from the white residential areas. They breed disease. The whites don't go near them. Some years ago a white investigating committee reported that they were a menace to health—that is, *the white man's health*. Since decent housing for the Bantus was out of the question because of excessively high costs, the Government solved the problem (or thought it had) through the passage of the Urban Areas Act, which aimed “to control the influx of natives into, and the removal of surplus natives from, the urban areas”.

This Act caused untold hardship. The surplus native was deemed to be one who lived in an urban area, but who was not employed there. During the harvesting season thousands of Bantus seek work in the rural areas, leaving their families in the towns. The Act made the families liable to eviction from their homes during the breadwinners' absence. Hundreds of families were shipped out of the crowded locations for this reason. After the harvesting season was over, families were banned from their urban area because the authorities were “controlling the influx”. And there was no more work in the rural area.

Urban areas issue a proclamation when they wish to prevent any further immigration. Most Bantus can't read, and unless they get wind of the proclamation they unwittingly break the law. Thousands of them have been fined and imprisoned for entering urban areas after the announcement of a proclamation. Such proclamations are repealed when the local industries cry out for labour. Immediately there is a rush of Bantus into the locations. No discrimination is made between farm natives and semi-skilled workers who have lived there before. Factories thus complain that they have to train a new set of employees every year.

The Act makes no provision for those Bantus who are temporarily unemployed because of sickness. There have been countless cases where the Bantu has been cut off from his family. He leaves the urban area to get work on a farm. Meanwhile the authorities put his location on the “closed” list. He can't get back. His wife and children may have jobs of their own—which makes it a costly business for the family to get together again.

The one apparent bright spot in the Act was the provision that “surplus” natives would be settled on land in the reserves. And perhaps they will be—when the Government settles the overcrowding problem in the reserves.

The average Bantu wage in the towns is £3 per month. But there are opportunities to earn extra money. The three most popular money-raising schemes are all illegal—room-renting, beer-brewing and prostitution. Most houses in the locations have three rooms—no kitchens, toilets or bathrooms. In the Johannesburg locations, where I roamed in

and out of houses for weeks, at least half of the population were living three and four to a room. All the rooms reeked of stale food. Ten families told me that they could afford no more than twopence a month for soap. Four out of five families I visited had no beds—only straw mattresses, torn and dirty. And in every house or room was the inevitable chest of drawers into which were crammed food, clothes, knives, forks—all the family belongings.

In Durban conditions are a good deal worse. I didn't dare to enter most of the houses I saw in the locations. It was literally dangerous. The Reverend W. E. Robinson, a missionary of Durban, said: "There are 30,000 people of all races in Durban who are housed in improper and insanitary conditions. *As many as eleven children often live in one room.*"

I decided there was a limit to what a publisher should expect of an author in his efforts to gather eye-witness material. I had no nose for that kind of news. I'd had enough of South Africa's slums—I thought I had seen the worst. So I took the reverend gentleman's word for it.

Thousands of Bantus are wiped out every year by tuberculosis. If one member of a family gets it, it is only a matter of time before the others do. There are about a dozen Bantu doctors in South Africa, and medical facilities provided by the white man are so hopelessly inadequate that sick Bantus by the thousands still believe in the witch doctor and his herbs. The Rockefeller Educational Foundation in New York offered the Union Government £56,000 a few years ago to build a medical school for natives. *But General Hertzog refused it on the ground that it wasn't Government policy to grant such facilities to natives.* In 1934 the South African Medical Association approved of a scheme for the training of native "medical aides". At the end of a four-year course the natives would become sanitary inspectors in the locations, or would work under district surgeons in the reserves. And in 1937 the Johannesburg Hospital Board "agreed in principle to provide facilities for the training of native nurses". The Board members had been influenced by the Chamber of Mines. The Johannesburg labour market had been threatened by the fact that pneumonia and diarrhoeal diseases accounted for more than half the native deaths during 1933-37.

Venereal diseases, says Dr. Theron, of the Union's Public Health Council, are "playing havoc with the Bantu race". He added that there were areas to be found where "colonies of natives are living *en masse* in a putrescent state." In the rural areas the syphilitic Bantu can get virtually no medical attention. Believing that the sun cures anything in time, he will lie in the field or on the seashore for days on end before he finally is disillusioned. In the Transvaal there is one hospital which treats venereal diseases. It is the Rietfontein Hospital, eight miles from Johannesburg. Eleven thousand cases were treated there in 1938. But it cost most of them their jobs. The syphilitic native must visit the hospital at least three times a week. He has to get permission from his employer. Nine out of ten dismiss a native if he has a venereal disease. The Rietfontein Hospital gives free treatment, but it still costs the native plenty of money. A Bantu who lives in Sophiatown, another Johannesburg location, told me that it was impossible for him to be cured of his syphilis without his family going short of food. He earned £4 per month. His employer told him that he could get leave of absence three afternoons a week. But he

would have to accept £3 as his total monthly wage during the treatment. His bus fare to and from the hospital would cost him eighteen shillings a month. It was a case of syphilis or hunger. This Bantu chose syphilis.

A druggist in Sophiatown told me that half the Bantus living there had syphilis. Only a few natives, he said, who came to his store for a cure could afford the weekly injections, which cost eleven shillings. A sick native usually prefers to patronize a druggist and supply himself with medicines up to his ability to pay for them rather than visit a clinic. The clinic may be miles from his home. More often than not there is a line of natives a street long waiting for attention.

Some druggists cheat the natives unmercifully. They do a tremendous mail-order business in bottled medical preparations sold under picturesque Bantu names. Many of them make universal claims; for example, a certain herbal mixture for a shilling is advertised to treat boils, syphilis, cancer, heart trouble, indigestion, pregnancy and sandworms.

Bantu babies probably die quicker than any others in the world. The Union Government publishes no statistics, and doesn't even demand registration of native births and deaths. Local authorities, however, sometimes give a vivid picture of the infant mortality rate. The medical health officer of Germiston, a town near Johannesburg, gave the death rate in 1936-37 as 557 per 1000 live births. At Benoni, another town on the Witwatersrand, it was "approximately" 500 per 1000 babies born during the same period. Most startling was the announcement of Dr. Hope Trant, superintendent of the Bridgeman Memorial Hospital, in the Transvaal. She said in 1935: "Recently I counted the number of babies lost by our patients in the first year. It worked out at about forty-eight per cent. Others die after their first year, so that the total child mortality during the first four years of life is roughly sixty-four per cent."

And these were children born in a hospital under expert medical care. Most babies are born in location houses or in huts in the rural areas.

A medical health officer in Cape Town stated the native health problem more clearly than any other South African to whom I spoke about it. He said: "It would be bad policy to spend large sums on native clinics and hospitals, on the training of medical aides and native nurses, while at the same time allowing the conditions conducive to the spread of disease to remain. Health in South Africa is more of an economic problem than a medical one. Nothing can be done till we clear up the slums and give the Bantu a living wage."

## XII

### BLACK TRADE-UNIONISM

BLACK TRADE UNIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA STRUGGLED FOR MORE THAN FORTY years to win the right of collective bargaining. The implications of the Atlantic Charter and a world-wide people's war finally won it for them. In June, 1942, the Smuts War Government recognized African trade unions. Like other Allied Governments, it had become aware that social

reform tended to strengthen the war effort and to give the people—all the people—a real stake in victory.

June, 1942, was thus an important milestone in Bantu history. And although it did nothing directly to improve the pitifully inadequate Bantu wages, it gave the trade unions an opportunity for the first time to fight for higher wages by constitutional negotiation with employers. Today there are about 50,000 Bantu members of twenty-two unions. Their wages range from £3 to £6 *per month*.

The history of black trade-unionism in South Africa is characterized by a long period of Government opposition as well as the hostility of employers. The Bantus were also attacked by the white trade unions, which resolutely refused for years to admit natives to their ranks. And even today only about three white unions permit a limited number of black members. The policy of white unions was very simply to maintain the industrial colour bar.

This policy precipitated a minor revolution on the Witwatersrand in 1922. The Chamber of Mines wanted to modify the colour bar and employ Bantus in semi-skilled positions. The Chamber gave as its excuse the falling price of gold. It explained that unless working costs were immediately lowered, twenty-four out of the thirty-nine producing mines would be forced to close down, throwing out of work 10,000 whites and scores of thousands of natives. The result was that 20,000 whites and 180,000 blacks struck. The blacks began to go back to their homes in the reserves while the white men fought out the issue among themselves. The Government, realizing that the home-bound natives couldn't be replaced quickly, persuaded the Chamber to reopen the mines. Some of the white strikers began to return to work. Then the shooting started.

The miners' representatives—the Rand Federation of Trades—lost control of the situation, and a Council of Action speedily organized a small army which held out against the police and troops for several days. The Council of Action was Communist-led. The revolutionaries, mainly Afrikaaners, felt that the Bantus were largely to blame, since it was on their account that the strike had started. Whether the Communists intended it or not, the revolutionaries made a point of attacking natives in the compounds.

Under such conditions the natives had decided a few years previously to organize their own exclusively black trade unions. Unfortunately, there was no experienced Bantu leadership for this venture. And the white trade-union leaders, of course, not only refused to help the Bantus, but sought by fair means and foul to break up any attempt by the blacks to help themselves. A start was made when a handful of native Communists, trained and led by whites, tried to rally the Bantus in the gold-mines. But with all the naïveté of over-enthusiastic Communist school-boys they laid themselves wide open to attack by the authorities. They foolishly introduced themselves as revolutionary leaders. They described the trade union they were trying to get started as merely a step to the "ultimate emancipation of the oppressed black workers" and the establishment of a black republic.

Such a policy, of course, was ridiculous. There were very few Bantus who were impressed with the slogan: "Africa for the Africans." Most of them admire white civilization, and fight not to wipe it out but to taste its

fruits. The Communists, however, urged native speakers to denounce "the white capitalist exploiters" and the whole white race!

Bantus were told to hold themselves in readiness to rise and "sweep the white tyrants into the sea". The Government naturally clapped Communist leaders, black and white, into gaol. Some years later, when they were released, a group of these Communists took a trip to Moscow. They apparently believed they would be hailed as martyrs. Instead, they were severely reprimanded. When they returned the party line in South Africa was switched. "Africa for the Africans" was quietly dropped and emphasis was laid on the "rights" of South Africa's white minority.

Meanwhile, in 1919, a vigorous Bantu trade-union leader had emerged. His name was Clemens Kadalie. He was a native of Nysaland and had no affiliation with the Communists. Kadalie was an impressive speaker and a man of some education. Although some years later he was dragged into a financial scandal involving union funds, he nevertheless blazed the trail of Bantu trade-unionism.

He founded the Industrial and Commercial Union. He sensibly avoided revolutionary slogans at first and ran the union on bona-fide labour principles. By 1924 the I.C.U. claimed 100,000 members. It had become such a political power in South Africa that General Hertzog was prepared temporarily to drop all traditional racial "principles" to gain its support. Hertzog, then leader of the Nationalist Party, appealed to Kadalie to influence the native voters of the Cape Province to vote against General Smuts' South African Party. Hertzog later rewarded Kadalie by passing a Bill which took away the Cape Native Franchise.

But Hertzog's appeal helped greatly to increase the membership of the I.C.U. Kadalie made big political capital out of the Prime Minister's betrayal, enlarging the I.C.U. by 16,000 members practically overnight. Kadalie now felt himself strong enough to seek recognition from the white South African Trades and Labour Council. But he had little success. The white unions said that if they allied themselves with the blacks the colour bar would be dropped, employers would engage skilled black labour and force the white man out of his job. Some believed that the Government would attempt to dissolve all South Africa's trade unions if the proposed unification took place. There were a few whites, however, who pointed out that terrific power would lie in their hands if they had Bantu support.

The unity campaign was finally scotched by the intervention of Government spokesmen. They deplored the encouragement given to Kadalie by "white visionaries wedded to silly ideas of brotherhood and the conference table". And most of the whites who had been thinking seriously of supporting Kadalie's plans retreated, fearing reprisals from their unions.

But the I.C.U. went ahead. During the next two years it was successful in several districts, particularly Natal, in increasing wages for its members. By 1926 the Government had become genuinely alarmed at its progress. From Parliament, pulpit and the Press poured agitation to check its growth and to introduce legislation that would brand the Bantu trade-union leader a seditious criminal. The Government invoked the law to restrict the mobility of black union organizers. And finally Kadalie himself was arrested and told he would have to stop touring the country organizing new branches of the I.C.U.

This had a profound effect on Kadalie. Since 1919 he had been convinced that the authorities could do nothing drastic to curtail his activities so long as he pursued a non-violent, constitutional policy. He had profited greatly by the mistakes of the Communists, who, he felt, had condemned themselves to failure from the beginning by advocating a revolutionary policy. But his arrest tended to change his mind. All over the Union, Bantus protested against his imprisonment. Demonstrations and mass meetings were broken up by the police in many districts. The Press and white public opinion urged the Government to dissolve the I.C.U. as a Communist-inspired organization. In fact, the pattern of events appeared to indicate that Kadalie's arrest was part of a deliberate plan to produce Bantu violence in order that the Government might have an excuse to break up the I.C.U.

But this plan—if it really existed—backfired. Native rioting became so widespread and native unrest so general that the Government released Kadalie. And Kadalie felt that he had won a victory. Whether the Government believed that, given enough rope, he would hang himself, there is no knowing. But Kadalie was angry. At a meeting of the African Labour Congress in Johannesburg he declared that he wouldn't tolerate any law that forbade Bantus the right to better their economic conditions. He decided that only a militant policy would dislodge the Government from its position. He did not go so far as the Communists had before him. He tried to strike a balance between the Communists and his own policy as it had existed before his arrest.

He demanded the nationalization of the goldmines, manufacturing industries and the railroads. "A few parasites are gambling with the riches of the country," he said, "and our first duty is to do everything that is *constitutional* to bring about better wages for the natives of this country. We should aim at taking over the mines, the land and everything that is good in it, and running them for the good of the people of South Africa and the world at large."

How he expected to achieve these aims constitutionally, not even Kadalie appeared to know. To make his policy respectable he tried once again to enlist the support of the white trade-union movement. He said that the Bantus should hasten to assure the white workers that "our movement does not aim at a native rising". He then declared: "The Bantus should stretch their hands forward to them. We must eliminate racial prejudice and develop a working-class spirit which must recognize that an injury to one is an injury to all."

After this address the I.C.U.'s membership increased beyond Kadalie's wildest dreams. And there was every indication that it was becoming too much for him to manage. For some months Communists had been filtering into the I.C.U.—and incidentally had directed most of the recruiting campaigns with considerable success. The I.C.U. leaders split into two groups—with Kadalie perched precariously in the middle trying to hold the balance of power. One group recommended that the I.C.U. follow a revolutionary policy and demand strike action; the other advocated expulsion of the Communists, and a continuation of the I.C.U. along "constitutional lines". For some weeks Kadalie watched the two groups fight it out. It was quite clear that he would have to support one side or the other eventually, or see the I.C.U. fall apart. He had no love

for the Communists, but was nevertheless committed to work for his declared policy of the nationalization of mines, industries and railroads. He was disturbed by charges that the I.C.U. was Communist-controlled—and yet his policy was nearer to the Communists than the *status quo* group. He sensed a desire on the part of the Communists to wrest control of the union from him. To maintain his leadership he could do one of two things: follow the Communist line or withdraw his policy of nationalization of South Africa's wealth and support the *status quo*.

He chose the latter course. He declared that the Communist element in the I.C.U. was a potential source of danger to its policy. He warned I.C.U. members that the union was based on bona-fide labour principles and that its only interests were fair wages and better labour conditions. He made no mention of the nationalization of mines. At the I.C.U. Congress of 1926 Kadalie expelled four prominent officials of the union. This action caused an irreparable split. Not all the members attending the conference endorsed Kadalie's stand. The conference broke up and held rival meetings. The expelled officials enjoyed a good deal of sympathy from hundreds of delegates who passed resolutions to work inside the I.C.U. for their reinstatement.

Kadalie, apparently frightened by Communist infiltration in the I.C.U., appeared to move a bit too far to the right to suit the majority of the I.C.U.'s membership. He declared that the strike weapon was obsolete. This may have been said to keep the Government off his back, because strikes by black workers in South Africa were illegal. Many of his followers, however, questioned the wisdom of such a statement at a time when the I.C.U. was nearly strong enough to force the Government to relax the anti-strike law.

They pointed out that black trade unions had once been illegal, too. But Kadalie stood firm. He disliked the Communists intensely—with justification. The Communists felt that Kadalie had the right instincts of a trade-union leader, but believed he was politically unreliable. They knew Kadalie to be a dynamic character and a man who commanded the respect of thousands of Bantus. But they tried to hustle him into decisions that involved risks. They criticized him with stinging Communist phraseology. And finally Kadalie's patience expired.

He said of the expelled officials: "Strikes were strongly recommended by those recalcitrant members who are the native emissaries of the European Communists. There is no question that the white Communists were out to lift the I.C.U. from our charge, for their hand has been seen in many proposals that have been put forward, and which savoured strongly of Communism."

But much of the I.C.U. membership was unimpressed—not because they favoured the Communists, but because they believed Kadalie had enlarged the issue out of all proportion to its importance. They saw in his observations the rantings of the everyday Red-baiter. And they had begun to challenge Kadalie's "constitutional policy", believing that it tended to thwart the I.C.U.'s progress. Unlike the Communists, they did not seek revolution. But they criticized Kadalie for limiting the I.C.U.'s powers. To some degree they were justified. Kadalie had almost lost sight of the I.C.U.'s political role in native affairs. To relieve economic suffering by demanding higher wages was one thing; but what

was wanted was a campaign against iniquitous anti-Bantu legislation.

In 1927 membership of the I.C.U. began to fall off. Members became irregular in their payment of dues. The Government tried to hasten the I.C.U.'s disintegration. Employers were urged to stamp "I.C.U." on the passes of natives they dismissed. This prejudiced their chances of finding other work unless they could produce evidence that they had left the I.C.U. Rumours were spread of mishandling of union funds, and questions were repeatedly asked at local meetings about money matters.

And then the financial scandal broke. The provincial secretary of the I.C.U. in Natal, a Bantu named Champion, sued for alleged defamation of character in a pamphlet published by a former member of the union. Judgment was given against Champion. It appeared that when he took the secretaryship of the Natal branch of the I.C.U. he had nothing but his monthly salary. But somehow he had managed to acquire two properties in Durban; he was sole owner of a café, a boot-repairing and tailoring store and a newspaper.

For thirteen months no funds had been deposited in the bank in the name of the I.C.U. When finally an account was opened, funds of the I.C.U. became inextricably mixed up with Champion's own money. Some thousands of pounds of cash disbursements were made by Champion without the sanction of any authority but his own. Quite plainly, these were violations, deliberate or otherwise, of the I.C.U. constitution. Champion tried to excuse them by pleading that the cash disbursements were authorized by the head office or by Kadalie himself.

The judge who presided remarked: "If it was the case that the head office (of the I.C.U.) or Kadalie authorized these wholly improper dealings with the funds, it merely implicates Kadalie and his associates in wrongdoing, but does not excuse it."

Champion's bank-book revealed that between 1925 and 1927 he had amassed £391 to the credit of his own private account. The case took the wind out of Kadalie's sails. There was no doubt that he had been negligent in the financial affairs of the union, but there was no evidence that he had been directly mixed up in the scandal. Kadalie's bank account revealed that his total income was derived solely from his salary as leader of the I.C.U.

Kadalie saw the prospect of *l'affaire* Champion breaking up his union. He desperately addressed an appeal for the second time to the white unions for a united labour movement. Only this would prevent, he thought, the disintegration of the I.C.U. The white Trade Union Co-ordinating Committee replied to Kadalie's appeal in a lengthy statement; it could not have described its position more lucidly.

It said: "The European worker is haunted by fear of competition with the great masses of Bantu labourers with their low standard of comfort and consequent willingness to accept wages which, to the European, means degradation if not starvation. He knows instinctively, if not by observation and reading, that the employing class is ever anxious to exploit the work of the weak to the detriment of those workers who have painfully attained a higher standard of living.

"Naturally this abyss yawning at his feet induces him to demand protection *even sometimes at the price of gross injustice to those weaker than himself*. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, so the policy hitherto



adopted has been one of 'keeping the native in his place' in order that certain of the higher-paid jobs might be retained as the special preserve of the European worker. If this policy had proved successful there might be no need—outside of the ethical aspect—to be discussing the question. Such is not the case, however. The native worker is constantly, if slowly, encroaching on these privileged positions."

A large number of I.C.U. members resigned. In 1928 Kadalie appealed to the British trade unions for an experienced man who would assist him in putting the I.C.U. back on a sound basis. W. G. Ballinger arrived from Motherwell, Scotland, soon after. He had been secretary of the Motherwell Trade and Labour Council, the second largest body of its kind in Scotland. Ballinger was a member of James Maxton's Independent Labour Party. He was a good organizer, a reasonably good speaker, though he lacked the vigour and personality of Kadalie.

Ballinger tried to reconcile the leaders of the I.C.U. It was a difficult job. Many of them resented his intrusion into a Bantu organization. Kadalie felt that he was officious and dictatorial. And the crisis came when Ballinger tried to introduce a system to control the union's finances. Kadalie resigned and appealed to his followers to leave the I.C.U. and form an "Independent I.C.U." Ballinger later formed another branch of his own.

Ballinger had revealed that the I.C.U. under Kadalie's leadership was £1300 in debt. "I found that they were not even able to pay my salary," he said. "Friends of mine had to raise money to pay me. There was no money to meet the expenses of my travelling through the country, and eventually I approached the Independent Labour Party in England and appealed to them for money, which they sent. I.C.U. officials were getting no wages, and, in fact, they were practically starving."

In 1929, less than a year after Ballinger's arrival, General Hertzog's newly formed Government stepped in and attempted to deliver a death-blow to the I.C.U. The general election of 1929 was called the Black Peril election. The Government said that Bolshevik activities among the natives were rampant. White mobs attacked Bantu meetings. The police banned natives from speaking at political meetings. Native union leaders were deported from certain areas without a trial. The Government refused to admit immigrants coming from Eastern Europe, particularly Lithuania, because these people were said to have a "Communitistic outlook".

It was a setback from which black trade-unionism never fully recovered. Kadalie faded out of the picture, his "Independent I.C.U." falling apart some months later. Ballinger struggled on, but there were wholesale resignations from the I.C.U. There was no progress in Bantu trade unions between 1929 and 1942. General Hertzog's Government forcibly discouraged it. But under General Smuts' War Government the Bantu unions have received the first official encouragement in their history.

## XIII

## FEAR IN THE PROTECTORATES

THE POINT ABOUT THE BRITISH PROTECTORATES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA—Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland—is that almost a million natives living there wonder how long the British Government will continue to protect them. They are governed at present by Resident Commissioners. Native chiefs are given wide jurisdiction over their people. The set-up is by no means perfect; the natives have no legislative powers, but they enjoy a far greater measure of freedom than those living in the Union. They are free, at least, from the Union's repressive legislation.

The Union, however, has been angling "to take over" the protectorates ever since they were established. It has created a kind of Sudetenland problem. Union politicians and industrialists, like the late Sir Abe Bailey, charge that the natives are poverty-stricken through the neglect of the British Government, and that such a thing cannot be tolerated "in the midst of the Union". Needless to say, that kind of propaganda has made no headway with the natives, whom Sir Abe and others hoped it would impress. They know the conditions of living for the natives in the Union and have no desire to bring themselves down to the same low level.

There are other arguments for the incorporation of the protectorates in the Union, some valid, some hypocritical and some merely cynical. It is said that the territories are geographically within the confines of South Africa; to a large extent the native inhabitants are economically dependent on the Union, since thousands seek work on the Witwatersrand goldfields each year. With the money they earn they pay their taxes in the protectorates. Thus much of the protectorates' revenue originates in the Union. Agriculture in the protectorates competes with agriculture in the Union. South African mining companies would like to exploit the abundance of minerals. The "problem" of land for Union natives and poor whites might be solved by taking over the protectorates—despite the fact that protectorate natives find it hard enough to make a living on the land as it is.

With such a programme the Union Government has the support of both the South African farmer and the industrialist. The poor whites, reaching out for anything that might help them, naturally are all for it. Although the transfer of the territories was provided for in the South Africa Act, the native chiefs and their subjects in the protectorates received a solemn pledge from London that there would be no incorporation without native opinion first being taken into consideration. The natives expect the British Government to honour the pledge.

It is an issue which Whitehall has ducked every time the Union Government has raised it. And the Union Government does raise it with purposeful regularity. South African spokesmen in London have been working on "incorporation" for years. They find that the root of the opposition is distrust of the Union's native policy. In 1938 Lionel Curtis addressed the Royal Empire Society in London, urging the transfer. He said there had been an improvement in the South Africans' attitude towards the blacks. The Rev. Arthur Karney, a former bishop

of Johannesburg, answered him: "The natives in the Union feel that they have had all hopes of progress taken from them. If a transfer is attempted without consulting native opinion, British prestige will be affected throughout Africa." Most brazen of South Africa's spokesmen was Mr. Oosthuizen, vice-president of the Cape Law Society. He declared he was "flabbergasted" by suggestions that the Union's native policy gave reason for distrust. He said: "The natives in South Africa are perfectly satisfied and contented . . . Britain can agree to a transfer, feeling certain that the Union Government will fulfil its trust honourably."

The British Government under Neville Chamberlain was too busy appeasing Germany in 1938 to pay much attention to the Union's demands. The obvious way to settle the dispute, of course, was to conduct a plebiscite. But the Union was dead against that. The outcome would have been a foregone conclusion, leaving General Hertzog's face distinctly red. The British did not want to embarrass the Union Government; they would need its assistance if war broke out in Europe.

Moreover, the British Government wanted no trouble among the natives in the protectorates. There had been disturbing rumours that some of the chiefs were prepared to resist incorporation with armed force. Besides, broken pledges were a sore spot with British public opinion—even when they concerned native peoples.

In 1933 the Union did more to damage its case for incorporation in one week than in years of verbal agitation. An "incident" in Bechuanaland gave South Africa what it thought was its opportunity to settle the question once and for all. Tshekedi Khama, one of Bechuanaland's ablest native chiefs, had ordered the flogging of a white man named Phineas Mackintosh. Mackintosh had attacked a young native who had apparently attempted to interfere with a native woman with whom Mackintosh was living in the royal kraal. Mackintosh had been tried in the past by native courts for seducing Bechuana women. One of them had had a child by him. In all the cases brought against him Mackintosh had agreed to be tried by the native court. In disputes between whites and blacks in Bechuanaland the white man may have his case heard before a white magistrate if he so desires.

Tshekedi had asked the Resident Commissioner several times to have Mackintosh removed from the kraal because he believed him to be a bad influence on the natives. But the Commissioner had ignored the request. Tshekedi decided that he would convince Mackintosh that he was *persona non grata*. And Mackintosh stated later that he was quite satisfied with the judgment passed against him.

A few hours after Mackintosh had received his punishment the district was alive with rumours of a big native uprising. The Bechuanas were mobilizing, the rumours said, for a showdown with the whites. The telephone lines between Bechuanaland and the Union buzzed. The white residents appealed to the authorities to call immediately for military aid, lest they all be murdered in their beds. Meanwhile Tshekedi, Mackintosh and the Bechuanas were asleep in theirs, Tshekedi hoping that Mackintosh would be humiliated enough to leave the kraal in the morning, Mackintosh hoping Tshekedi would allow him to stay, and the Bechuanas sleeping soundly after an exciting but rather tiring day.

Meanwhile Union Cabinet Ministers in Cape Town talked by 'phone with Bechuanaland, urging the Commissioner to order armed protection. It was not the Union's affair, but here was a chance to prove to Britain that the protectorate system was a failure because it gave wicked native chiefs opportunities to flog white men and threaten the white inhabitants with massacre. A few hours later a detachment of Royal Marines, clad in full field kit with steel helmets and several days' food rations, and three howitzer field guns manned by bluejackets, arrived in Bechuanaland. They took up positions at strategic points, waiting in expectation for a charge of black savages, brandishing their spears and screaming blood-curdling war-cries.

Instead, they met a nation of harmless people with whom they fraternized and permitted them to inspect their rifles and howitzers. The troops remained in Bechuanaland during Tshekedi's trial, at which he was charged with exceeding his powers. He was suspended and banished from the native reserve. Tshekedi was thus punished not for flogging a white man *wrongfully*—a man who had upset tribal life in the kraal—but because he had flogged a white man. Such a precedent could not go unpunished. Other chiefs with other white men living in their kraals might get ideas. It was, the authorities believed, worth all the trouble of a military display, even if it did cost taxpayers in England £4000.

As it happened, the British man-in-the-street didn't agree with the authorities. They thought there had been too much fuss over one white man who obviously deserved what he got. Tshekedi was subsequently reinstated after a campaign on his behalf in Britain's liberal newspapers, and representations made to the Dominions Office in London. Thus the "incident" flopped. The Hertzog Government tried to salvage it. Here, it said, was abundant reason why incorporation was so necessary. But the British weren't listening. A year later an assembly of Bechuana chiefs dashed the Union's hopes. They said: "This meeting of Chiefs and Councillors present on behalf of the respective tribes of the Bechuanaland Protectorate records its protest and objection to the incorporation of the territory in the Union of South Africa."

While there had been every expression of opposition to the Union's plans in Bechuanaland and Basutoland, there was a strange quiet in Swaziland. I went into Swaziland in 1939 to find out what the Swazis felt, and to interview their Paramount Chief, Sobhuza II. The royal kraal was a few miles from a picturesque little town called Mbabane. I had made no appointment with Sobhuza—I did not know when I left Johannesburg that the royal kraal boasted a telephone. In Mbabane I was told that I'd never get within a mile of the Paramount Chief.

"What do you want to see him about?" the Mbabane hotel manager asked me suspiciously. "You're a stranger in these parts, aren't you? Sobhuza never sees strangers," he added with finality.

"I want to know what he thinks about the proposed incorporation of his country in the Union," I answered. "I've come down from Johannesburg to see him."

"That's a pretty touchy subject," the manager said. "You'd better be careful or you'll get the police after you. We don't want any trouble down here. You'd best ask the police if you can see him first."

So that was how it was, I thought. Somehow they had kept Sobhuza from saying a word—muzzled him, it seemed. I walked out of the hotel and strolled down Mbabane's dusty main street. Suddenly a young man came up to me. "I overheard your conversation with the hotel manager," he said, with a furtive glance over his shoulder. "If you want to see Sobhuza, for heaven's sake don't ask the police. They'll escort you back to the border quicker than you can say Jack Robinson. You'll be out—that's what!"

"Well," I said, "it's nice of you to warn me, but exactly how do I get to see Sobhuza? I haven't travelled 300 miles over these appalling roads to go home empty-handed, have I?"

The young man told me that there was only one way, and that was to visit the Queen Mother. If she was in a good humour, and if I came loaded with gifts, she might arrange an interview with Sobhuza.

"Take her some chewing-tobacco," he urged. "That'll win her heart. She loves it. But keep away when she spits. Her aim's lousy!"

And with that he left me as suddenly as he had appeared.

I bought ten tins of the most expensive chewing-tobacco I could find. I then went to the town's haberdashery store and purchased several yards of silky material—a bright emerald green. I piled the gifts into the car and drove to the Queen Mother's kraal, a few miles off the main highway. On the way I picked up a Swazi who promised to use his good offices with the Queen's Councillors. I dropped him outside the kraal and waited in the car. About ten minutes later five old men appeared, each wrapped in a huge woolly blanket—the temperature was about 102 degrees. I presented them with a tin of tobacco each and stated my business. I didn't tell them that I wanted eventually to see Sobhuza himself. It was going to be difficult enough to broach the subject, anyway, without making the Queen Mother feel that I was using her as go-between.

The five old men held a hurried consultation. Two of them walked back to the kraal, apparently to inform the Queen Mother that she had a visitor. Meanwhile, I chatted with the other Councillors, chewing a little tobacco that one of them had offered me. The situation was too critical at this stage to risk offending them by refusing. I pulled out the green material and explained that the Queen Mother's dressmaker might make her a nice something or other.

Finally I was escorted into the kraal, which was protected by a high bamboo fence. I was told that I could speak with Her Majesty for fifteen minutes. The Queen Mother—she died the following year—was sitting on the ground surrounded by several more Councillors. She was old and wrinkled. Her breasts hung sagging to her navel. She wore an animal-skin from her loins to her knees. I shook hands with her and she smiled gravely, revealing two yellow teeth which stuck out at extraordinary angles. I presented her with the tobacco, and gingerly offered my apologies for so humble a gift. As for the appalling green material, I had left it in the car in my excitement. Perhaps it was just as well.

For some time we spoke politely about the weather—which was her speciality. Besides being the Queen Mother, she was also the Swazi weather bureau—or rain doctor. Whenever there were droughts or long periods of rainless weather the Swazis would implore her to produce a

violent thunderstorm. She would remain confined in her royal hut, refusing to see anybody, except at meal-times. But at the psychological moment she would appear, order the sacrifice of one or two head of cattle to appease the Rain God, and sure enough the clouds would roll across the heavens and the rain would come. The Queen Mother suffered terribly with rheumatism, a reliable barometer anywhere in the world.

I spoke in English through an interpreter—one of her Councillors. I started to banter lightly around the question of incorporation. To my surprise, she was vehemently outspoken.

"Never, never," she said, "will my people submit to Union rule. Britain has treated us well. We want no change. We want to be left in peace. Let the white man stay in the Union."

I asked her why she felt that way, why she thought incorporation would be distasteful to the Swazis. She showed a remarkable knowledge of the issue. Of course, there was always a chance that the interpreter was getting his own opinion across. Anyway, the interpreter said she said:

"Our young men go to the gold-mines by the thousand. They come home full of the white man's habits—bad habits. They crave after drink and women. If we were incorporated in the Union, thousands more would go to the mines. The tribe would fall apart. We would no longer be able to call ourselves the Swazi nation."

I asked her how Sobhuza felt about it. The interpreter and the Queen Mother and the Councillors talked rapidly for a few moments, casting apologetic sidelong glances at me. The interpreter said: "The Queen Mother suggests that you see Sobhuza about that." Which was just what I wanted.

At that moment the Queen announced to her Councillors that she'd had enough and would the white man please go because she was going to visit some newly born babies at the other end of the kraal. I shook her hand again—it felt like a warm piece of dried cod, rough and gritty—and thanked her.

Before I left, the Councillors said they would get in touch with Sobhuza's Councillors, and see if they could arrange an interview. I was to go to Sobhuza's kraal two days hence and ask for his Chief Councillor.

When I got back to the hotel late that afternoon the manager looked at me curiously and asked: "What did the old girl say?"

Two days later I drove up to Sobhuza's royal kraal. It was connected with the highway by a private road. Swazis waved and smiled as I drove past them. It made me optimistic. These are friendly people, I thought; Sobhuza surely will see me. A few hundred yards from the royal residence I was stopped by a deputation of Councillors. One of them was Sobhuza's uncle, a huge man of about sixty dressed in a light khaki suit. I introduced myself.

"The Paramount Chief is away," he told me. "He won't be back for two days."

"May I apply to you for an interview with him in two days?" I asked.

"I can make no promises. The Paramount Chief is a very busy man," Sobhuza's uncle replied. "But if you care to come back in two days we shall see . . ."

It was quite evident that I was getting a polite brush-off in the best

Swazi manner. I thanked the Councillors, telling them that I was a persistent person and would be back.

"We can make no promises," they chorused as I drove away.

Back in Mbabane I found the police waiting for me. What was I doing there, where was my passport, didn't I know that Sobhuza wouldn't talk; would I please leave Swaziland and return to the Union before I started trouble? The Resident Commissioner, I was informed, would be furious if he knew what I was after.

I left Mbabane an hour later and made for the Portuguese East African border. There was a chance that I might find out where Sobhuza was—if, indeed, he was anywhere but in the royal kraal. When I got to Bremersdorp, about eighty miles from Mbabane, I went into a store—I believe it was the only one—and bought some cigarettes. The man behind the counter had a friendly face. Store-owners in the protectorate knew everybody, and the natives perhaps better than anybody. I poured out my story, hoping that he might know where Sobhuza was.

The store-owner grinned. "Your name Selwyn James?" he asked politely.

By this time I was hardened. You couldn't move a yard in Swaziland without the entire white population knowing about it.

"I just got a 'phone-call from the manager of the Mbabane Hotel." He smiled. "He said you were out to start trouble."

I was exasperated. I said that I hadn't felt so frustrated since I was in Nazi Germany. I said that it would be much better if they arrested me and told me frankly that it was *verboten* to get within a mile of Sobhuza, that the Paramount Chief of Swaziland, a servant of His Majesty's Government, was being held incommunicado. *That* would give me a story and it wouldn't look so hot to readers of English newspapers in Britain. I told him unequivocally that I intended to stay put in Swaziland, making a pest of myself until something violent happened.

"That won't be necessary," the store-owner said, laughing. "My name is George Bennet." We shook hands. I later found out that Mr. Bennet was unofficially the Paramount Chief's adviser in all matters pertaining to whites. He was also one of Sobhuza's best friends. He had been born and brought up in the shadow of the royal kraal. They had known each other as boys.

"I can arrange for you to see Sobhuza," said Bennet. "But it's a pity you didn't come to me in the first place. You would never have seen Sobhuza by your own efforts—not after what you did."

"And what," I asked, "did I do?"

It developed that I committed a terrible breach of etiquette by visiting the Queen Mother and asking her opinion on incorporation. Sobhuza's Councillors were furious when they heard of it. That was why they refused to let me see him. The unwritten law was that such an important matter could only be discussed with the Paramount Chief himself and that the Queen Mother did not represent the Swazi people. The fact was, of course, that the Queen Mother was no diplomat, and if you asked her a question she would answer it. Sobhuza and his Councillors were not committing themselves. Theirs was a diplomacy every bit as smooth as its counterpart in Europe.

I met Sobhuza that evening. Before he arrived at Mr. Bennet's house

I was given a lesson in Swazi court etiquette. Mr. Bennet said that when Sobhuza appeared I must rise and offer my hand before he raised his. I was not to take notes in front of him. I could smoke, but I mustn't light up till Sobhuza did.

Sobhuza finally arrived, accompanied by his uncle. He was a youngish man in his middle thirties. He had a light-brown skin and a handsome, aesthetic face. He was clad in one of those heavy woolly blankets—I couldn't see what he wore underneath. Sobhuza spoke faultless English, speaking in the reasoned tones of a lawyer. He had been educated at Lovedale Native University in the Union, where he had received his A.B. degree. Not once during an hour's conversation did he allow himself to be caught by some of my rather direct questions.

At first we talked of the European situation. He was genuinely worried over the recent reverses of the Loyalists in Spain, and was disgusted by the atrocity stories he had heard about Franco's Moors. There, he said, in Spain, was where democracy should be defended.

We then got round to incorporation. "I have spoken to many of your people," I told him, "and they all seem to be against incorporation. Do you believe they are against it?"

"They speak as individuals," Sobhuza replied, "but they are the Swazi people. They will tell you what is in their hearts."

"Do you want Swaziland incorporated in the Union?" I asked.

Sobhuza smiled—a rather weary smile, I thought.

"I want what is best for my people," he said carefully. "They are happy and I want to keep them happy."

"Would they be happier inside the Union?"

"That is a hypothetical question. They are happy now."

"Are you satisfied with the present system? If there should be any change, would you ask your people to support it?"

Sobhuza said: "I am perfectly satisfied under the protection of Britain. I have been promised that I and my people will be consulted about any change. My people will decide their own destiny."

"Is the issue a daily topic of conversation among your people?" I asked. "Do you get the feeling that they are nervous and want a lead from their Paramount Chief?"

"The issue is discussed frequently, yes. But I can find no nervousness. There is no crisis; the issue has not been joined. There is no need to rally them, because there is so far nothing to rally them about. The Royal Council cannot fully discuss the matter. It does not know the Union's detailed plans. The British Government has not yet approached us. Before I could decide what is best for my people I must know all the facts. But the Swazis are a conservative nation—they are good people who will know what to do when the time comes. I have every faith in them, and in the British Government's pledge to them."

There was no need to keep Sobhuza from his several wives any longer. I had found out what I had come for. While it was obvious that Sobhuza was against incorporation, it was still not clear why; unlike the Bechuana Chiefs, he had refused to commit himself. Incorporation would drastically reduce his authority over the Swazis. Swaziland would be overrun with prospectors from the mining companies. The poor whites would invade his lands. The Swazis would be more or less detribalized. And



Sobhuza would certainly lose the £2000 yearly allowance paid to him by the British Government.

There was the possibility, of course, that Sobhuza was somewhat of an appeaser, hoping the issue would never have to be decided, and making sure that if the dreaded day did come he would not be subject to reprisals for his objections to incorporation. Whatever was in his mind, he told nobody—not even George Bennet.

#### XIV

#### BECHUANA, BASUTO AND SWAZI

WHILE THE NATIVES IN THE PROTECTORATES LIVE BETTER THAN THEIR cousins in the Union, they have their problems and their hardships, too. The chief complaint is that taxes drive the natives into the Union to work in the mines. Sir Alan Pim, investigating conditions for the British Government a few years ago, recommended drastic budget adjustments. Taxation should be reduced, he said. The salaries of white officials should be cut, while surplus officials should be retrenched. And more money should be spent on education, public health, scientific agriculture and transportation.

Bechuanaland is the largest, though the least fertile, of the three protectorates. Twice the size of the Transvaal and a little larger than the State of Texas, it has an area of 275,000 square miles. It stretches from the northern frontier of the Cape Province, between South-west Africa on the west and the Transvaal on the east, to the southern border of Rhodesia. Bechuanaland was occupied by British forces and proclaimed a protectorate in 1884. It was a step of great strategic importance and was taken at the insistence of the South Africa Company. The Germans had arrived in South-west Africa. To the east the Boer republics bordered it—and the Boers were beginning to expand westward. Bechuanaland was the route along which the South Africa Company and Cecil Rhodes could keep contact with their interests in Rhodesia. Boer or German annexation of Bechuanaland would not only have cut off the Cape Province from Rhodesia, but would have menaced all Britain's—i.e. the South Africa Company's—lands in Central Africa. Bechuanaland consists mainly of sandy wastes, waterless all the year round. During the First World War Bechuanaland's southern deserts served as a useful barrier between the South Africans and the Germans in German South-west Africa. A little over 100,000 square miles are occupied by the Bechuana tribes today. The more than 260,000 natives find it difficult to make a success of agriculture because of the poverty of the soil. Much of Bechuanaland's fertile area is the property of the white settlers and of the South Africa Company. But the natives manage to produce enough grain most years to feed themselves on little more than a subsistence level. Cattle-farming is the basis of the protectorate's economy. Whites and blacks between them own more than 600,000 head of livestock. But pasturage in the native-held lands is scarce—and their cattle generally are not as fat as the white man's. In recent years, however, the British

Government has constructed irrigation works in certain native districts, resulting in some increase in the natives' grain output and cattle herds.

The tribal system has been pretty well preserved, and the land is held under communal tenure. Taxes—five shillings more per head than those in the Union—are collected in most districts by the tribal chiefs. Some thousands are imprisoned annually for non-payment of taxes, but the percentage is probably lower than in the Union.

During the past nine years the cost of living in Bechuanaland has increased considerably, and the fall of prices for cattle and hides has forced more and more natives into the employ of the white man. Moreover, the Union has all but banned the export of cattle from Bechuanaland, because of cattle diseases and because of the agitation from Union farmers with whom the Bechuanas must compete. But conditions are not as bad as they were in 1932—when an Imperial Commission reported that a large percentage of native children received only one meal a day, and that it consisted of a small bowl of Kaffir corn.

In 1939 I drove over hundreds of miles of sandy desert, talking to the Bechuanas and their headmen. I was amazed to see that thousands of them managed to keep alive in their dirty little kraals. Their cattle, sheep and goats appeared to thrive on desert vegetation, mostly camelthorn and wild melon. I was told that hundreds of head of cattle had died during the 1933 drought. Bechuanaland, one headman told me, started from scratch again after the famine.

The most alarming feature of Bechuana life in the early months of 1939 was the abundance of Nazi literature filtering mysteriously over the border and finding its way into the hands of the Bechuana Chiefs and headmen: It seemed to leave no impression on them, but it was quite clear that Nazi agents from South-west Africa were at work.

I had the luck to come face to face with one of these Germans. He had been touring the kraals, posing as a tourist, in the territories of the Bamangwato tribe. From what I could gather, his efforts had been singularly unsuccessful. He had kept away from the Bamangwato's Paramount Chief and had concentrated on the headman. I met him a few miles outside the Bamangwato's capital town of Palapy, headquarters of the Paramount Chief.

He was a young man, not more than twenty-four. Thick-set and blond, he looked every inch a German. He was preparing to camp for the night when I drove up. "Welcome," he said in good English. "Join me for supper. I've got roast guinea-fowl, tinned butter, crackers and half a tin of apricots."

Not knowing what I was in for, I gratefully accepted. He introduced himself as Fritz Landberg, carefully explaining that he was born in South-west Africa and was therefore a Union national. It was not until after we had ruined the guinea-fowl and eaten the last apricot that I was treated to a first-class Nazi dissertation. What Fritz said about his Fuehrer, how he was going to come goose-stepping right where we sat before many more months had passed, was the usual Nazi drivel, slobbered from a fanatical and inexperienced youth. What annoyed me most was that Fritz was a plagiarist. He would reel off passages of *Mein Kampf*, not even bothering to credit his beloved Fuehrer.

But distinctly more interesting was the brief account he gave of his

work in Bechuanaland. And he appeared to be amply provided with funds.

"I've been doing the pioneer work for the Fuehrer," he announced arrogantly. "My work and the work of those who come after me will be completed long before Hitler gets here. But when he does he will be welcomed by all the Bechuana tribes."

"What," I asked, "makes you believe that Hitler will trouble to come to this dreary hole, even if his legions do capture it, to be welcomed by a lot of racially inferior people?"

"We shall depose the Paramount Chiefs," Fritz went on, ignoring me. "Their heads are stuffed too full of decadent democratic ideology. Some of the headmen will make good puppets, though. Twenty of them have already promised me to work for a 'greater Reich' in Africa."

"How do you get them to work for you?" I asked casually. "Do you read them *Mein Kampf* by the light of the moon?"

"It's wonderful what a few pounds will do," Fritz said, "to seal a bargain. I find that most of them hate the British and the Afrikaaners. Naturally I tell them that under the cowardly British Government they will all starve eventually, that because of Britain's stubborn stupidity in Europe in trying to resist what the Fuehrer has ordained, Bechuanaland will be plunged into war—and the Bechuana will be asked to give their lives in defence of Britain, the country that conquered them and rubbed their noses in Bechuanaland's desert sand."

"Seems to me," I said, "that you'd do much better if you went straight to the Paramount Chief with your troubles. You'd make a good impression on him, I'm sure. And—for a few pounds—you'd save yourself a lot of weary travelling, searching out an odd headman here and there."

Fritz snorted. "The Paramount Chief is a democrat," he said scornfully. "I know I couldn't do anything with *him*."

Before I left Fritz, who was packing his camping kit into his Dodge Sedan, I pinched myself several times to make sure I was awake. I had met Nazis before, young ones like Fritz. But never had I come across anything so madly naïve as he. And I was glad. If the Fuehrer leaves the pioneer work to these young nincompoops, I thought, nobody need worry.

Several days later I found a Bamangwato headman to whom Fritz had spoken. "Oh, *that* young man," he said; "he talks a lot, doesn't he?"

I asked the headman if he had made sense of what Fritz said to him. "He wanted to usurp the power of the Paramount Chief and lead the kraal against the white man," said the headman.

"Did he offer you any money?" I asked.

"Yes, eleven pounds."

"Did you accept?"

"Of course I did—why not? If the white man is foolish enough to offer money for a service as yet unperformed, I am not one to refuse. I am loyal to the Paramount Chief. I will obey him and the white man will be disappointed. We are happy in this kraal. No white man with eleven pounds can start trouble here. The Bamangwatos have honour. I took the money to the Paramount Chief—and he handed it over to the police."

I only wish Fritz could have heard him. He wouldn't have believed his ears.

Basutoland is easily the most beautiful protectorate. It is mountainous country as awe-inspiring in some parts as Switzerland. It is set in the middle of South Africa surrounded by Union territory. Here the Basutos own all the land—12,000 square miles of it—and no white man can grow so much as a single radish. The only white men in Basutoland are traders, officials and missionaries.

In the old days the Basutos sought refuge in the mountains from the military Zulus. Later they were hounded and threatened with extermination at the hands of the Boers. Their wise old Chief, Mosesh, appealed to the British for aid. "Let me and my people rest and live under the large folds of the flag of England before I am no more," he said in a note to Queen Victoria.

As in the other protectorates, conditions have improved a little since the famine of 1933. Soil erosion is the chief complaint, especially in the lowlands, where most of the natives live. The white administration has tackled the problem, but only half-heartedly. In 1933 a dam was built to catch the rains when they came. Hundreds of Basutos built it, and the administration spent about £2000. When it was finished there was an official opening. A score of white officials and magistrates attended it, and the Basutos stood around believing that here at last was something that would prevent their families from starving again. Two weeks later it rained, and the dam collapsed. No engineers had been called in to supervise its construction. It had been built on crumbling, porous soil!

The 660,000 Basutos pay twenty-eight shillings a year in taxes—and twenty-five shillings extra for every wife. In addition, some of the Chiefs levy a special tribal tax. Several of the Chiefs are corrupt. They run their native courts as a means of enriching themselves. If the Basuto cannot pay his tribal tax he is fined two or three head of cattle. Tribal law has been so tightened up that the Basuto has come to commit all kinds of petty offences unknowingly. And it is the Chiefs who reap the benefit.

Basutoland's principal products are wool and cereals. The fall in wool prices before the war ruined thousands of Basutos. Today, however, the price is high, and Basuto wool-growers prosper.

The health of the Basutos is bad. The climate in the lowlands, hot and humid, has encouraged the spread of typhus. During the famine nearly thirty per cent of the male population under forty was wiped out by typhus. There are no more than twenty white doctors in Basutoland—and only two hospitals.

Swaziland, the smallest of the protectorates, covers an area 6700 square miles. History has dealt with the Swazis badly—they own little more than one-third of the land. When Swaziland was an independent sovereign state ruled by Chief Umbandine, grandfather of the present Paramount Chief, Sobhuza, the country was invaded by prospectors and adventurers. Gold had been discovered in the Transvaal, and there was a belief that the gold reef extended into Swaziland. Umbandine sold his country for a song: He granted concessions for mining and trading in

return for boxes of sweets, cases of wine and gin, and sometimes—but not often—a few pounds in cash. A few years later the white men banded together and persuaded Umbandine with a few more boxes of sweets to grant a charter under which a white committee would rule the land. Swaziland became a republic, called the Little Free State. In 1906 Swaziland became a protectorate under Britain. Two years previously the charter had been nullified. A Concessions Commission was set up to discover just how much of Swaziland had been given away by Umbandine. All concessions, such as the right to levy taxes, and others that invaded the sphere of Government, were abolished. But so far as land concessions were concerned, the Swazis lost out. The Commission deprived them of a lot of it. Mineral and grazing concessions remained.

Today the 157,000 Swazis produce chiefly tobacco, corn, vegetables, potatoes and livestock. The country is largely undeveloped, and, given some encouragement, could produce bananas, sugar, coffee, tea and cotton in far greater quantities than it does. The Swazi livestock industry is handicapped by Union import regulations. The Union Government maintains an embargo on all cattle weighing under 800 pounds. The general scarcity of good grazing land in the native areas makes it a costly business for the Swazis to feed their cattle up to the regulation weight.

The 1933 famine hit the Swazis as hard as the Bechuanas and Basutos. But somehow they came through it with less damage to their economy than the others. Unlike the natives in the other protectorates, the Swazis make it a rule never to grumble. They pride themselves that their nation is an offshoot of the Zulu tribe. Which, they say, makes them superior to the Basutos and the Bechuanas.

## XV

### THE EMPIRE-BUILDERS

THE ENGLISH SOMETIMES REFER RATHER CONTEMPTUOUSLY TO THEIR cousins in the colonies and the dominions as "those colonials". It is meant that they are inferior people who live in the colonies only because they have not made a success of their lives at home. In the old days the young man who failed to graduate from college would be advised by his disappointed parents to "go out to one of the colonies". It was a punishment, something like going to prison—a shameful business with only one small hope: that the future years might bring some kind of redemption. The idea was that competition was less intense in the colonies; that brawn, not brains, brought success.

There is no way of telling whether the colonies were originally populated largely with England's "failures". In any case, many of them made a fortune in gold and diamonds, or in years of hard, pioneering work built up profitable sheep, wheat and tobacco farms. But they were seldom redeemed back home. They had become "colonials"; they had a "colonial outlook", meaning narrow, uncultured minds, and they had "ruined the language" with newly developed accents and intonations.

Consequently these outcasts could never make their homes in England

again even if they had wanted to. They settled in the colonies for good. They raised families in the colonies and finally died and were buried in the colonies. Their children were sent to school in England, were teased unmercifully by their fellow-pupils for being "dirty little colonials" and emerged with a burning desire to get back to the colonies where people would treat them as equals.

These general rules applied particularly to Britain's African possessions, India and Australia. They still apply in principle, though with some modifications. South Africa and Australia, now full-blown, self-governing states, have their own schools and culture.

There is one exception to all this: the Rhodesians. The English tend to absolve the Rhodesians. They are different. They have been less influenced by their colonial surroundings than the others. The Rhodesians are *not* colonials. They out-English the English. Their accents are perfect. Their sense of fair play is beyond reproach. They pride themselves on their matchless self-discipline in a largely undeveloped, unmodern country that would drive lesser beings to distraction.

Rhodesia is ninety-nine per cent British. The Boer influence is negligible. The native problem has not caused the same distress as it has down in the Union. The Rhodesians have steeled themselves against any but British influences, and they have overdone it. They are out of date. They are reactionaries. They hold with a grip of iron to the traditions of the Empire and the old school tie. They are against cads and rotters. The British Labour Party is their pet aversion. A man like Sir Stafford Cripps is not trusted by the Rhodesians. He is a reformed rotter, but still not entirely acceptable.

The Rhodesians are tough, and back home the English look upon them in some awe. They *are* different; they are *preserved* Englishmen hacking out a colony in the best traditions of the nineteenth-century empire. They are museum pieces.

"The trouble with us Rhodesians," one of them said to me in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia's big railroad town, "is that we have a 'Rhodes' complex. We are empire-builders to a man, and we won't admit that it's out of fashion. We haven't scratched this country yet, we're still very much in the pioneering stage—and we're glad of it!"

Rhodesia is split into two parts: Southern and Northern, separated by the Zambesi River. They were annexed to the British Crown in 1923 and 1924 respectively. Before that time they were "company colonies", private property, privately governed and defended by the British South Africa Company, better known as the Chartered Company. This company, as we shall later see, has had an extraordinary history.

Southern Rhodesia, with an area of 150,333 square miles, was granted semi-dominion status in 1924. This means that it is self-governing, with its own Parliament, ballot boxes and other democratic trimmings. But the *British* Parliament keeps a stern eye on its legislation. London still insists that Rhodesian Acts of Parliament are subject to review before they become law. This restriction has proved necessary sometimes, especially when the Rhodesians have tried to slip through legislation which has been unfavourable to the natives. The British Parliament has on several occasions wagged a fatherly finger and refused to permit such legislation to become law.

The Union of South Africa has asked for the incorporation of Southern Rhodesia, but the British Government won't hear of it. Under the present system London can watch over native policy in Southern Rhodesia and to a large extent assure the protection of native interests and rights. If the Union were to take over the colony, the natives would be subjected to the Union's anti-native legislation and "segregation" policy. While the Rhodesians have tried to make their colony a "white man's country", Britain has sought to keep native interests paramount as far as possible. The Southern Rhodesians once voted on incorporation, and they turned it down. Lest the Rhodesians be misunderstood, this did not mean that they believed that the natives' welfare should be the primary consideration of their Government. A few may have voted against incorporation for this reason, but the majority were against it because they naturally wanted to keep Southern Rhodesia a semi-independent state which might some day be granted full-fledged dominion status. Moreover, they were thankful that they were spared the Boer-Briton racial strife which characterized every phase of life down in the Union; and they had no desire to see their country overrun by land-hungry Boer farmers.

Those who voted for the proposed incorporation were willing to risk Boer infiltration and to forgo the prospect of unfettered self-rule because they wanted above all to restrict native rights with the Union's native laws. Southern Rhodesia would then become a "white man's country", free from the British Parliament's controlling influence.

Southern Rhodesia's big problem, as in other African territories where whites have settled permanently, concerns land for the natives. There is no question that the 1,370,000 natives are better off than those in the Union. Areas have been set aside for native land settlement under the control of native Chiefs, and although they are insufficient, they are not so noticeably unfertile as the native reserves in the Union. Of course, the white farmers still have managed to occupy the lands most suitable for the raising of crops and cattle; and irrigation systems have been established to guard against drought. The natives, however, are backward in their agricultural methods, tending to raise only one crop—corn—and getting little advice from the whites on how to make their land yield more. And, as in the Union, they are locked out of the skilled trades.

Maize, corn, cotton and tobacco are Southern Rhodesia's chief agricultural products. The plantations are worked by native labour, which is influenced not by high wages but by the inevitable tax system and shortage of native-owned lands. Southern Rhodesia grows only a very small percentage of its own food. The bulk of its consumer goods, including food, is normally imported. But the war has changed that. A Food Production Committee was set up in 1942 to increase local production of foodstuffs.

Southern Rhodesia's mining industry has not developed so rapidly or on the same large scale as the wealthy Witwatersrand gold-mining district of the Union. Investors in the Witwatersrand can be reasonably sure of quick returns. The goldfields were discovered by the white man and had been untouched by the Africans. In Southern Rhodesia the white man arrived a little late—about 3000 years late. It is estimated that

over £150,000,000 of gold was shipped from the ancient goldfields of Rhodesia. The ruins of these mines were rediscovered in 1867. They are to be found in Mashonaland, Southern Rhodesia, scattered around the remains of an ancient city known as the Great Zimbabwe.

The origin of the Great Zimbabwe is a historical mystery, but the most interesting theory is that the city was built by the Phoenicians or the Sabaeans of Southern Arabia. In any case, it is abundantly obvious why the Great Zimbabwe was built. The miners, who apparently were good engineers, were constantly attacked by native Africans and Arab tribes from the north who resented their intrusion. The invaders therefore decided to protect themselves by constructing huge stone fortresses at suitable points around the goldfields. Tall towers served as observation posts. And a massive temple is situated in a near-by valley. It is the architectural design of this temple that appears to give support to the theory that the miners came from Arabia. It greatly resembles another temple discovered at Marib, capital of the Sabaean kingdom in Arabia.

When the miners finally were driven from the Great Zimbabwe, all indications show that they employed a ruthless "scorched-earth" policy. It is believed that wild Arab tribes sweeping down from Central Africa attacked them in full force and without warning. The ruins of the city and the mines themselves show evidence that the miners left in a great hurry. As one historian has put it: "Little exquisitely wrought things of gold were found smashed in the debris. Shapely bowls of soapstone were discovered wilfully broken. The abandonment of piles of valuable gold ore and the existence of other uncompleted work testified to this long-forgotten *débâcle*."

The present-day mining centre is located at Umtali, about 140 miles west of the Great Zimbabwe ruins. And despite the Phoenicians or the Sabaeans, gold is still the chief mineral produced in Southern Rhodesia. Bantus are the miners now; they are supervised by white overseers who direct operations for shareholders living in Europe and America. The natives receive the same low wages as those paid on the Witwatersrand.

Southern Rhodesia also produces coal, asbestos, chrome ore and a small quantity of silver. The Phoenicians (or the Sabaeans) apparently overlooked these mineral deposits.

Northern Rhodesia is different in two vital respects from the territory south of Zambesi River. First, it is a British Crown Colony, ruled by a Governor who may or may not take the advice of the Legislative Council of white residents. And secondly, its development both in mining and agriculture has been appreciably smaller. The white population of 10,000 is about one-sixth as big as that of Southern Rhodesia. The Bantu population is approximately the same.

The Northern Rhodesians are jealous of Southern Rhodesia's semi-dominion status, but the British Government has resolutely refused to extend their authority. London does not want its colonial native policy replaced by the rigid segregation policy that both the Northern and Southern Rhodesians appear to admire. The British Government has managed to keep Northern Rhodesia a Crown Colony because of its small white population. Cries for self-rule were not so loud as those of the 63,000 Southern Rhodesians. The Northern Rhodesians feel frustrated



and they hate particularly the British insistence that native interests are the Government's chief concern. In 1930 members of the Northern Rhodesian Legislative Council sent a sharp note to British Colonial Secretary Lord Passfield. It said in part:

"British colonists . . . hold that the British Empire is primarily concerned with the furtherance of the interests of British subjects of British race and only thereafter with other British subjects, protected races, and nationals of other countries in that order. . . . To British settlers the paramountcy of the native appears to be incompatible with justice. To subordinate the interests of civilized Britons to the development of other races, whose capability of substantial advancement has not been demonstrated, appears to be contrary to natural law."

This letter expressed perfectly the mentality of the Colonel Blimp type of British colonist whose notions of racial superiority have been the despair of hundreds of liberal colonial officials for years. Lord Passfield answered the letter bluntly. He said that the views of the Legislative Council members were "wholly irreconcilable with the considered policy of His Majesty's Government". Some years later the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies made a clear-cut statement of British policy in the colony. He said: "It is the accepted policy of His Majesty's Government to give the Africans in Northern Rhodesia . . . opportunities for qualifying for any post or employment for which they are capable, and to supply the requisite educational training. It is important to create conditions in which an increasing number of applicants can be trained for large-scale employment—agricultural, medical, educational, technical, legal, clerical and the like. But we must remember that the pace of this movement depends largely on our ability to provide trained African teachers and give adequate education."

This, of course, is a commendable policy, sincerely intended. But the British Government has apparently found that the provision of "trained African teachers" is no small matter. While appropriations for native education have been trebled since the outbreak of war, the fact remains that the natives of Northern Rhodesia are still awaiting the full results of the British Government's policy.

Native villages and locations are breeding-grounds of disease. In the urban areas, especially, conditions are appalling. Many Bantus build their own little huts, more often than not out of corrugated-iron sheets. In some of the bigger locations conditions are better, but the custom of sub-letting produces overcrowding and consequent uncleanness and disease.

The general picture of native life in Northern Rhodesia is distressingly similar in some respects to that of the Union of South Africa. Despite the British Government's paternal interest in the natives, adequate land for native settlement is still a dream. About 150,000 natives work in the copper, zinc, gold and manganese mines. Large numbers of others leave the country for months at a time to work in neighbouring colonies. The result is that more than fifty per cent of the native male population is absent from the kraals of many districts for a long period. Moreover, in the mining districts, on the white man's farms and in the urban areas they are out of touch with tribal life and away from the influence of their Chiefs.

An honest-to-goodness agricultural development programme among the rural natives would prevent them from becoming so dependent on the labour market for a living. But the white settlers are hostile to such a plan—which perhaps explains the British Government's half-heartedness in introducing it. The whites, especially the farmers, are fearful that an improved native agriculture will give the Bantus a chance to control the country's economy. In an area where railroads run through Bantu maize plantations the natives once threatened to compete with the white maize-growers. A Maize Control Board was immediately set up to protect the white farmers. By establishing quotas and fixing prices for both whites and blacks it was able to cut down native production of maize for marketing to a minimum.

More exciting and unquestionably more scandalous than Rhodesia's present is the history of its past. And its past is primarily the life-story of Cecil John Rhodes and his Chartered Company. Rhodes, the son of an English country parson, was one of the slickest financiers ever to hit the world. He dedicated his life to amassing a vast fortune and to building the British Empire in Africa. He launched his career as a Natal cotton-planter in 1871 at the age of eighteen, but quickly decided that the work was unprofitable and unexciting. The following year he gave up his plantation and trekked across country to the diamond fields of Kimberley. Here he found a crude mining camp inhabited by as crooked a gang of fortune-hunting scallywags as ever had been gathered together in one place. Business honesty and personal integrity, to put it politely, were entirely out of place. Brute force in a free-for-all scramble for the best position was what counted. The weak and the honest were not given a chance. The strong and the clever thugs were successful. Rhodes arrived on the scene virtually penniless, but within a year he had become one of the most successful diggers. Rhodes was young and immature. But he was smart, as quick as a whip, adaptable, and possessed of an amazing business acumen. His aim for the next few years was to swallow up all the competing diamond companies of South Africa. His own interests developed rapidly. He formed the old De Beers Company and gradually bought up hundreds of small claims, all, or nearly all, of which proved productive. In 1888 Barney Barnato, an English Jew who also owned many of the Kimberley diamond-mines, was induced by Rhodes to absorb his interests in the new De Beers Consolidated. This company, directed by Rhodes, Barnato and Alfred Beit, who had helped Rhodes to come to terms with Barnato, controlled ninety per cent of South Africa's diamond output. The influence of the company in the British Cape Colony forced through the Cape Parliament legislation exempting De Beers Consolidated from taxation.

Rhodes at a company meeting in 1888 described its power perfectly. He said: "The value of this property will be practically almost equal to the whole value of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope. *We have got an industry which is almost like a Government within a Government.*" (My italics.)

Rhodes used the fabulous profits of De Beers Consolidated to finance his thrust into the country which was later to bear his name. Rhodesia was situated to the north of the Boer Republics. Rhodes had to work fast because the Boers were slowly expanding northward; and there had been

rumours of Dutch, German and Portuguese explorers laying claims to the country. Five months after the amalgamation of the South African diamond companies Rhodes sent his agents to get a concession from Lobengula, King of Matabeleland and Mashonaland. These territories are today part of Southern Rhodesia. The Rhodes delegation, headed by Rochfort Maguire, a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, sought the right to work minerals in Lobengula's territories. At first Lobengula steadfastly refused to allow his country to be overrun by thousands of prospectors, who would, he knew, finally drive him from his throne. Maguire offered him 1000 rifles, 100,000 rounds of ammunition, and 100 gold sovereigns monthly. Lobengula still held out. Maguire and his companions had expected the King to be stubborn, but they had come armed with a case or two of champagne. Lobengula took to champagne as Rhodes took to diamonds. When Maguire promised to present the King with a second-hand steamboat to ply on the Zambesi River, Lobengula was sufficiently drunk to scratch his mark on the contract.

In London influential groups fiercely attacked the deal. The British Secretary of State opposed particularly the idea of including arms and ammunition in the price of the concession. He was told by Rhodes' agents that there was no need to worry on that score; the natives, they said, didn't know how to handle rifles and always "put up the sights as far as they would go to make the guns shoot harder". In the meantime Lobengula had sobered up to find that he had signed away his country. He was angry. He ordered the white man out of his domains, telling them to take the rifles, the ammunition, the gold sovereigns and the steamboat with them. But Lobengula had signed a contract, and the white men stayed. The King then struck upon the idea of writing to Queen Victoria about his plight. Victoria was unimpressed. She suggested that Lobengula must be in the wrong because Maguire and his companions possessed reputations as thoroughly trustworthy British gentlemen.

In the meantime Rhodes had applied to the British Government for a Royal Charter to be issued to the newly formed British South Africa Company. London granted the charter in 1889. The Duke of Abercorn became a director of the company in order to lend it an air of respectability. Rhodes was pledged to buy out rival concessionaires in Lobengula's territories; and, while the company was granted wide powers under the charter, it first had to get Lobengula's consent before it could use them. This stipulation was thrown in to appease groups in England that had opposed the granting of the charter. It was later to be flagrantly violated.

In 1890 a pioneer force occupied Mashonaland, but a year later the company's financial outlook was grave indeed. The 1500 settlers had to pay £70 a ton for food because of the transportation difficulties. Fever had laid some of them low. And the company was spending £250,000 a year on the administration of the colony and the maintenance of its defence force. Lobengula, too, had begun to give Rhodes trouble. The settlers had subdued the Mashona natives. They promised to be a good source of cheap labour. Lobengula's Matabele tribe ruled over the Mashonas before the white man came. Once a year the Matabele warriors would sweep down on the Mashonas and carry off a few head of cattle.

This custom proved tiresome to the settlers. One day in 1893 a group of Mashonas cut the telegraph wires near the town of Victoria, presumably to make wire armlets. They were caught. They paid their fines with cattle they had stolen from Lobengula. The King sent a regiment of his warriors up to the Victoria district to teach the Mashonas a lesson.

A war with Lobengula was exactly what Rhodes wanted to revive his company and increase the territories under its rule. Rhodes' friend and lieutenant, the forceful Dr. Jameson, raised a private army, which, added to the Company's police force and aided by the police of Bechuanaland to the south, was strong enough to rout Lobengula and his Matabele warriors. Lobengula himself went into hiding. He later surrendered, and died shortly after. The British South Africa Company's shares hit the ceiling. Rhodes, occupying the convenient post of Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, declared amidst cries of approval from his Cabinet of yes-men that the Company had won the war single-handed and would therefore take over conquered Matabeleland as its private domain. Although the defeat of Lobengula had been substantially aided by the Imperial Bechuanaland police, Rhodes nevertheless got what he wanted. Matabeleland now belonged to the Company. It was cheap at the price. The war had cost the Company £113,488.

In 1896, a few months after the notorious Jameson Raid on Kruger's Transvaal Republic, the Matabeles and the Mashonas rebelled. Jameson had left the country virtually undefended when he crossed the Transvaal border with his 500 Company police and Rhodesian volunteers. His little invasion force was captured by the Boers, leaving Matabeleland and Mashonaland without protection. The natives had been waiting patiently for three years for just such an opportunity to present itself. Their lives had been terribly restricted by the Company. Lobengula's herds of cattle had been confiscated. And cattle diseases and drought were added to their miseries. Here, while the white men squabbled among themselves in the Transvaal, was a chance to get even.

Two days after Rhodes had arrived in Rhodesia to take over Jameson's duties the Matabele warriors slew every settler they could lay their hands on. White volunteers were quickly recruited and Imperial troops from Bechuanaland came up to stamp out the rebellion. The Matabele natives retreated into the hills. But then the Mashonas rose and attacked the white men. Back in London the Company's shares nose-dived.

The Matabele tribes were not defeated. They could not be ousted from the hills. It was Rhodes' exceptional courage that finally brought peace. With six companions he rode unarmed into the hills to work out an armistice with the Matabele.

The party camped and waited. Soon several Matabele Chiefs appeared. The *Daily Telegraph* correspondent who accompanied Rhodes describes the scene thus: "The Indaba (Council) lasted for five hours, all points at issue being thoroughly discussed, and full explanations proffered by the white men to allay the uneasiness which the Chiefs evidently felt at certain possible consequences of the surrender. Then the Chiefs rose, and each threw a small stick at the feet of Mr. Rhodes, indicating their willingness to surrender their guns (*given to them in 1888 by Rhodes' agents*), while another similar stick meant they were ready to hand over the *assagais* (spears)."

Rhodes died in 1902 at the age of forty-nine. The publication of his will converted some of his critics. He had left most of his fortune to the Rhodes Scholarship Fund, established to grant picked students of the British Empire and the United States a year's education at Oxford University.

After the Matabele-Mashona rebellion the British Government stepped in to restrict the British South Africa Company's broad powers under the charter. The defence of Rhodesia henceforth was to remain in the hands of the Imperial authorities. The Company's police force was disbanded and it was no longer able to raise volunteers for further expansionist schemes. In his remaining years Rhodes devoted himself to the industrial and agricultural development of Rhodesia. He built railroads, highways and telegraph lines. He literally "opened up" the country for white settlement.

The Chartered Company's rule over an area four times as big as the British Isles came to an end in Southern Rhodesia in 1924, and in Northern Rhodesia the following year. It was handsomely compensated. The British Government paid out £3,750,000 in cash to the Company *and allowed it to retain all its mineral rights*. The railroads were left largely in its charge. It receives fifty per cent of any land sold by the Government in North-west Rhodesia till 1964. It still owns almost 3,500,000 acres of mining and agricultural lands in Rhodesia and Bechuanaland.

The system of granting concessions has retarded the growth of many of Britain's African colonies. And the natives are the ones who suffer. This is particularly true of the Rhodesias. A British Colonial Office report on Northern Rhodesia, issued in 1938, says of one particular district:

"The land shortage is mainly due to the concession of some 10,000 square miles. . . . This was unfortunately followed by the eviction of numbers of natives, even though the land was not then wanted, and, indeed, has never yet been utilized for white settlement. Wide stretches thus lie waste, where from the air can be discerned the traces of former cultivation. That the natives deeply regret this lost country is certain. . . ."

But until all the concessionaires are bought out native resentment will continue. The natives can hardly be blamed for being somewhat sceptical of the official theory that their rights are "paramount".

## XVI

### NAZIS IN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA

THE FIRST FEW DAYS I SPENT IN SOUTH-WEST AFRICA WERE ENOUGH TO confirm all my worst fears. They were, indeed, enough to convince me that the mandate to this former German colony should have been withdrawn from the Union Government's charge the moment General Hertzog became Prime Minister. For here, tucked away in one of Africa's most strategically important corners, was a seething little piece of Nazi-land. It was a raised dagger waiting to plunge itself into the back of the

Union of South Africa. The Union Government was not merely tolerant of it; General Hertzog was unquestionably guilty of criminal negligence. His appeasement went much further than Chamberlain's. *He was willing to let the Nazis putsch if it meant maintaining good relations with Germany.*

And in April, 1939, the Nazis were all set to revolt. It was to be Adolf Hitler's birthday present from the Germans of South-west Africa. Preparations had been laid for months. They were waiting only for April 20th. Four days before the Nazi plans were blocked the Prime Minister was apologizing to the German Government for critical remarks made by the Mayor of Port Elizabeth about Hitler. Hertzog had announced that he was about to frame a new Bill which would prevent Hitler's good name from being maligned in the Union of South Africa. Meanwhile, his desk was piled high with reports from the Union's espionage agents in South-west Africa concerning the imminence of the Nazi *putsch*. And when asked if he would demand an apology from the German Government for permitting Reich newspapers to publish vicious attacks on General Smuts, his Minister of Justice, General Hertzog's reply was a simple no.

It was Smuts himself who insisted on blocking the Nazi *putsch*. In a stormy Cabinet session with Hertzog he said that it was a challenge that could not go unanswered. Appeasement, he pointed out, had failed, at least so far as the South-west Africa mandate was concerned. There was nothing to do but to send police reinforcements into the territory. Hertzog had kept the espionage reports from Smuts. Not once had he discussed them with Smuts or other members of the Cabinet. Smuts' information had come from the Intelligence Department of the British Colonial Office in London. Hertzog was furious when he found out that British spies had been working in South-west Africa. Apparently he had thought that the reports in his possession were the only ones available. Hertzog gave in and permitted Smuts to act only when Smuts had threatened to resign and to cause a major political crisis by "going to the country" with his information.

Early in April a new Nazi Consul-General, a man named Lierau, had arrived in Windhoek, the capital of South-west Africa. He replaced Dr. Von Oelhaven, an arrogant Nazi ex-cavalry officer who had indulged in constant petty quarrels with the local Fuehrer. Lierau had arrived at the psychological moment, a few weeks before the *putsch* was scheduled to take place. He had come direct from Czechoslovakia, where he had been Consul-General at Reichenburg, in the Sudetenland. He had been a leader of the Henlein movement and had played a part in the return of the Sudetenland to Germany. That was what made his appearance in South-west Africa so significant. Added to the British Colonial Office's report to Smuts, his arrival made it obvious that the Nazis were seeking to take back South-west Africa.

These facts about the new Nazi Consul were pointed out to General Hertzog in the House of Assembly a few days before Smuts sent police units into the mandated territory. Hertzog pleaded ignorance. He said flatly that he did not know of Herr Lierau's background. There were only two explanations to Hertzog's curious conduct: either he was the most abysmally ignorant Prime Minister South Africa had ever voted into power, or he was lying—and lying for a purpose.

The three weeks I spent in South-west Africa were in March, 1939. The Nazis were conducting a war of nerves. They were spreading all kinds of unpleasant rumours. "They were drilled and regimented," as General Smuts put it seven months later, "and in a condition for anything." There were about 9,500 Germans out of a total white population of 30,000. The others consisted largely of Afrikaaners, with a sprinkling of Britons. The trouble with the vast majority of non-Germans was that they were simply not interested in politics and refused to take the Nazis seriously. "You newspapermen," was the scornful observation of a British merchant up in Windhoek, "are always exaggerating. The Nazis are like little boys; they like to play games. Let 'em; they'll never try to take over here. They wouldn't know how to go about it."

But this was no game the Nazis were playing. They had created a state within a state. Nearly all of the Germans were Nazis. Some of them would have liked to keep out of politics, to be left alone to run their farms and businesses peacefully. But the fact that most of them had relatives in Germany usually made them good party members. Six thousand of them had become naturalized British subjects or Union nationals, proving to some extent that they preferred British rule. Between 1933 and 1939 all the schools which German children attended were Nazified. Teachers were imported from Germany to spread the Nazi gospel. Youths were given free trips to Germany through Dr. Robert Ley's "Strength Through Joy" movement. While in Germany they were put through an intensive political training, and returned to South-west Africa imbued with notions of restoring it to the Reich.

Every German farming community, every village and town inhabited by more than twenty Germans, was organized under a local Fuehrer into a Nazi Party cell. When the Union Government banned the youth movement, called the "Hitler Jugend", it re-emerged a few weeks later, calling itself the "Pfadfinders". Its members received military training from Wehrmacht officers who had come from Germany on German passports. In the last three months of 1938 German ships had unloaded enough rifles, machine-guns and hand grenades at Walvis Bay harbour to start a full-scale revolt. By April, 1939, these weapons had been distributed among the Nazis and carefully hidden. General Smuts' police units might easily have been overwhelmed if the Nazis had started shooting. But the Nazis were taken by surprise. They had orders to start the revolt on April 20th, Hitler's birthday. The arrival of the South African police on April 19th threw the Nazis into confusion and scotched their plans. German efficiency had failed; unexpected happenings had left individual Nazi cells without leadership or direction—and personal initiative was lacking. Smuts' police arrived at precisely the right moment—not too soon, not too late. The German Consul and the Nazi leaders were given no time to issue new orders. They received no word from Berlin. If the police had entered the mandate sooner, new orders might have been issued and the *putsch* taken place according to plan.

The Nazis were ably represented in March, 1939, in South-west's legislative assembly. Their spokesman was Dr. Hans Bruno Karl Hirsckorn, a round-faced, middle-aged German who had emigrated to

South-west Africa as an official of the German Colonial Service before the First World War. He was now the leader of the Deutsche Sud-west Bund. He was on the worst possible terms with Dr. Von Oelhaven, the German Consul, who was recalled to Berlin a few weeks after I had left. Their quarrel, so far as anyone could gather, concerned the problem of who should be South-west's Fuehrer when the territory had been handed back to Germany. Dr. Von Oelhaven was not, it seems, a very good Nazi. He was a Prussian, stiff, heel-clicking and self-disciplined. He was also a snob, and he hated the idea of Dr. Hirsekorn, who had been a minor official in the old colony, occupying a leading post in a restored German territory. Berlin had placed the two of them on equal terms, pledged to work together harmoniously and efficiently for victory. Hirsekorn resented Von Oelhaven's snobbishness. It was out of keeping with the new spirit of the Third Reich. And when the Consul was recalled it appeared that Hirsekorn had won the battle.

Dr. Hirsekorn hated newspapermen. He complained bitterly and constantly that they misrepresented the Nazis in the mandated territory, that they discovered all kinds of Nazi plots which in reality did not exist. I had arrived at an unfortunate time. Negley Farson had interviewed both Von Oelhaven and Hirsekorn a month before I appeared and had given both of them rather an uncomfortable time with his well-chosen questions. Von Oelhaven refused to receive me. My persistent visits to the German Consulate resulted finally in my being escorted from the premises accompanied by threats of prosecution for trespassing if I dared to come back. When I told Dr. Hirsekorn this (he had refused an interview at first) he smiled knowingly and assured me that that would happen to every snooping newspaperman when all South-west Africa was German territory again. South-west Africa, he said, would not be taken back by force. It was up to Britain to bring about the transfer—and that Britain would he had no doubt. Like many Nazis, he had implicit faith in the continuation of Mr. Chamberlain's appeasement policy. He said flatly that rumours of a Nazi *putsch* in South-west Africa were absurd, because so long as Mr. Chamberlain held power in England *it would not be necessary*.

He added rather plaintively that the Nazis in South-west Africa were trying to help Mr. Chamberlain. In October, 1938, they had urged (through Dr. Hirsekorn) a plebiscite to determine whether the population desired to be returned to the Reich. This was extraordinary, because the Germans would have been outvoted by the 21,000 non-Germans in the territory, and there was no assurance that all the Germans would vote the Nazi way. In short, the plebiscite (which was never held) would have been lost by the Nazis.

Dr. Hirsekorn gave another of those knowing smiles when I pointed this out to him. "It's true," he said, "that we would probably lose. But the world would know that the German minority of 9,000 in South-west Africa wanted a change, and that's what we want to prove. Mr. Chamberlain would then have something to lay before his Cabinet. The case against returning our colonies would be immeasurably weakened."

I said that there were undoubtedly many Germans who would vote against the Nazi proposal, if they were given an opportunity to cast a secret vote. Dr. Hirsekorn said: "Of course, there would be a handful



of traitors, but only a handful. Even the Saar and Austrian plebiscites revealed a few discontented fools. There are fools everywhere—and a *plebiscite would show us where they are in this country.*"

I asked him how the plebiscite should be conducted. He said that predominantly German districts should have German organizers and officials at the polls. In mixed districts he suggested that there should be an equal number of German and non-German officials, but that the Germans should have the privilege of choosing the non-Germans. Everything was to be conducted with fairness and good faith, just as it was in the Saar and in Austria!

What about the natives? Dr. Hirsekorn contemptuously pushed that question aside. "Do the South Africans permit the natives to vote?" he sneered. To which there was unfortunately no answer. I said that there seemed to be an attempt to convert the natives to Nazism in parts of South-west Africa. Several German seamen in Walvis Bay had been caught red-handed preaching the Nazi gospel to a group of Bantus.

"Naturally, we want the natives to be prepared for the day when we take over," said Dr. Hirsekorn, "and we must tell them that they will get a better deal from us than they have been getting from the South Africans. The German seamen you mention were merely enthusiastic Party members. Your democratic system gives them the privilege of talking as they please. Of course, they take advantage of it. You can't expect anything else."

For a number of years, even before 1933, the Germans had been trying "to control" the 317,725 square-mile mandate. So far as votes were concerned, they had been outmanœuvred. The Union Government in 1928 imported from Portuguese Angola about 2,000 Boers whose ancestors had broken away from the Great Trek of the nineteenth century. The Union realized that their contribution to the mandate's prosperity would be small, but that was hardly the point. Their voting power was what counted. It cost the Government £500,000 to settle them on farmland, but it brought the Union nearer the day it could claim South-west Africa as a "fifth province" with the consent of the majority of its inhabitants.

The Germans decided that the next best thing was to buy up as much property as they could lay their hands on. In this way, when the time came, they could point to their holdings as a substantial reason why the territories should be returned to Germany. Thus many German colonial companies bought back their expropriated plantations and mines when they were auctioned off in London in 1924. The German Government subsidized these transactions. The companies employed English representatives to bid for them. It was supposed to be a secret that these companies were trying to get their former properties back. In some cases British companies, acting under suggestions from the British Government, outbid them. Today it is impossible to check British and German interests in South-west Africa or Tanganyika. German capital has seeped into British concerns until the directors of the companies themselves are quite unable to discover how many of their shareholders are German nationals and how many are British citizens.

It was not until January, 1939, that the Union Government sought to put a stop to Germany's persistent attempts to buy back the colonies.

A large area of farming land in South-west Africa had been thrown open to settlers. The Nazi Government had put through its bid on behalf of some German citizens. The Union Government outbid the Nazis and the deal was closed with unusual rapidity before Berlin could cable its representatives and order them to buy the land at any cost.

"And if it hadn't been for Smuts," a South African up in Windhoek said, "the Nazis would have bought up every foot of the land and would have paid any price for it. Hertzog was afraid of offending Hitler. He wanted the Nazis to have it. But not Smuts—he insisted and forced Hertzog to back down."

There are approximately 4,000 farms in South-west Africa. Most of them are owned by Afrikaaners and are situated in the "Police Zone", which is a strip of farm country in the middle of the mandate. On either side of it is burning desert, largely uninhabited except for the little Bushmen. The Germans, for the most part, stick to the trades and professions. They are mechanics, shopkeepers, factory managers, mine managers and foremen, doctors and lawyers. They are all, if not Nazis, fervent German patriots—except for the handful of Jews, who hide their heads in shame and humiliation. The young Germans, born in the mandate during and after the First World War, are the worst of them. They lived in hopes before the outbreak of war in 1939 of being deported back to Germany by the authorities. They knew how they would be fêted through the streets of German cities as heroes.

In Windhoek young Nazis were getting military discipline at the local gymnasium. I saw them marched from one end of the gymnasium to the other in military formations by a German officer who had only recently come from Germany. All around the room swastika flags were hanging. It was here that I met a German youth, a fierce Nazi fanatic, who threatened to push my face in if I cabled any uncomplimentary dispatches about the Nazis from Windhoek. He would know, he assured me, if I did, because he had friends in the Post Office who would report to him what I had written. "We've had enough of you foreign scribblers," he said. "We'll give you hell if you say anything nasty." This youth was no more than seventeen. But he was a broad-shouldered six-footer with a lean pink face and flaxen hair. When I told him that I had no intention of sending any cables from Windhoek, that I was there only to satisfy my own curiosity about South-west Africa's Nazis, he shook his big fist in my face and warned me that there would be a day of reckoning "in a Nazi court" for people like me who were trying to spike the country's glorious future as part of the Third Reich.

While he was talking, a group of young Nazis had gathered around, nodding their heads approvingly, muttering Nazi slogans in parrot-like fashion where it seemed appropriate. I was finally rescued by the German gymnast-officer, who angrily told the youths to go home and apologized to me for what he called their "natural Nazi exuberance". He explained that they were jumpy and nervous when reporters were around, especially foreign ones.

"They've had some bad experiences," he said. "The first few times they were interviewed by South African newspapermen they were on their best behaviour. But it didn't do any good. They were insulted by impertinent questions. You can hardly blame them if they are apt



A BANTU HOME.

[Photo European.]



*Photo European.*

A NATIVE VILLAGE IN NORTHERN RHODESIA.

to defend their honour. They're really good boys, but they don't get a chance in this country. When they go to Germany they hope the day will never come when they have to return here. *They love Germany*, but they hate this country as it is today."

There was a proud story the Nazis used to relate in Windhoek. It concerned a nineteen-year-old German in a small settlement up-country who refused to permit a Jewish doctor to operate on him for an appendicitis. The youth was in frightful pain, waiting for a doctor to arrive from another settlement. His parents knew the doctor was a Jew, knew that they would be ostracized by the community if they permitted him to touch their son. But it was either that or nothing. When the doctor finally showed up, the youth asked him point-blank whether he was a Jew. The parents did not have time to signal the doctor before he replied in the affirmative. The youth, so the story goes, swore on the life of his Fuehrer that no Jew would cut *him* open. The doctor tried to administer an anaesthetic, but the youth jumped out of bed, burst his appendix and died, cursing the Jew and his parents with his last breath.

It was a wonderful story to circulate in Nazi circles. Here was another Horst Wessel, another young Nazi whose memory would immortalize the movement.

A South African lawyer in Windhoek to whom I had a letter of introduction showed me another side of German life in South-west Africa. Throughout the mandate, he told me, there were Germans who were secretly or openly opposed to the Nazis. They were a mere handful, too stubborn or too decent to adhere to the Nazi system. If they were business men, they were boycotted and finally forced to close down and move to another district, where their reputations inevitably caught up with them. If they were farmers, the German-controlled wool or meat exporters refused to handle their produce. If they were mechanics, they would find it difficult to get a job.

The family X to which I was introduced in Windhoek was a perfect example of what the South African was talking about. It consisted of a thirty-eight-year-old German who had emigrated to South-west Africa in 1927, his wife, a buxom woman of thirty-two who was born in the colony, and their two children, a boy of ten and a little girl of five. Mr. X owned a tailoring establishment in Windhoek. It had proved a reasonably profitable business for several years. But after 1933 Mr. X had refused to conform. He was a Socialist; not a professional Socialist, but sufficiently outspoken to evoke a good deal of resentment from his Nazi customers.

"They tried to tell me that Hitler was a Socialist," Mr. X said, "and that I should be glad that my country had emerged from the crisis with a Socialist at its helm. At first I wasn't sure. Hitler seemed to be solving the unemployment problem—which was what drove me from Germany. But the treatment meted out to the Jews, and the Nazi rearmament policy, soon convinced me that my early fears had been justified. I refused to join the Bund. When my kid was old enough to go to school I sent him to an English- and Afrikaans-speaking school. All the German schools had been Nazified.

"I was visited on numerous occasions by officials of the Bund. They were friendly to begin with, saying they were sure that I would 'come

round' in time. But they made me sick with their violent nationalist slogans. As a Socialist, I am an internationalist. They brought me *Mein Kampf* and pamphlets that had been smuggled into South-west Africa on German boats. They promised me that they would recommend my store to their members if I would join the Bund. They didn't begin to threaten me till much later. One morning I received a letter from the German Consul. In bitter terms he asked me why I had refused to join the 'cultural' Bund, through which I could keep in touch with developments in the Fatherland. He regretted my attitude, adding that he hoped my father and mother in Munich wouldn't hear of it!

"I knew what that meant. I had told no one that my parents were still alive or that they lived in Munich. But, somehow, the Nazis had found out. Quite obviously, they were determined to make an example of me. I decided to see the thing through. I tried to look at it rationally, without emotion or political thinking. Supposing I had become a Nazi; I would have been under suspicion, I would for ever be an 'unreliable'. My politics were enough to condemn me. I was happy under the mandate system; I was as free as a German could be in South-west Africa. There was the chance that the Union would take over the country in a few years. Then I would be a South African national without any reservations, not a 'second-class' citizen, as I am today. My father was a Socialist. I figured that they'd probably pack him off to a concentration camp soon enough, anyway. The fact that I was one too only tended to speed up the process. From a moral viewpoint, of course, there was no need to rationalize. I would find no peace if I were a Nazi. My wife told me frankly that she would leave me and take the children with her if I joined the Bund. I knew and she knew she wouldn't, but that was the way she expressed her feelings.

"Then they ostracized us. They stopped buying their clothes from me. Most of my wife's friends pretended they didn't know her. Some of them were sorry for us, but they were afraid to say so. My business started to fail, but I managed to keep it going at a low ebb. We moved into a smaller house. We had less to eat. But inside we glowed with pride. There was no turning back now, and that made it much easier for us to go on. There were no more visits from Bundsmen. We began to make friends with English people and Afrikaners. We thought we had escaped the Nazis.

"But we were wrong. Two months ago they broke into our house. They smashed the furniture, burned my books in the back yard, piled all the food from the larder and put it into the bathtub, which they filled with water. Our children were in hysterics when we appeared. They had been blindfolded and tied to a water-pipe outside the house. Our neighbours saw them, but they were afraid to go to the rescue until the Nazis had left.

"I reported it to the police, but it didn't do any good. They're still looking for the swine, or they say they are. We moved into furnished rooms. Our morale was pretty low, but we consoled ourselves with thoughts of what might have happened to us if we had been living in Germany. But the end came three weeks ago. Something happened that made us change our minds about living here. We want to get away now—out of the country. *We have to.*"

I had been listening to the story in the home of the South African lawyer. Up to this point Mr. X had spoken in level, unemotional tones. But now his voice began to quaver and break. His eyes darted around the room and his whole frame grew restless. The South African quickly changed the subject. "How about a sundowner?" he said breezily. He turned on the radio and started to mix the drinks. I talked with Mr. X about irrelevant things, trying to shake from his mind whatever it was that was bothering him. Finally he left. "Now," I said to the South African, "what was he going to say?"

"It's not a pretty story," he replied. "It gives me the creeps, but it just shows you these Nazi fellows will stop at nothing. They picked up Mr. X's kid on his way home from school three weeks ago. They told him that his father had been going to bed with some native girls and that any day he would leave his family. I can't tell you what they said to him in detail, but from snatches of what the boy related afterwards they were pretty crude. Then they took the kid out of town in a car, telling him they were going to show him one of the native girls his father had been sleeping with. They told him that his father didn't love him and that he'd be much happier if he went to a German school. But X's boy is a spirited little shaver. He didn't believe them. He yelled and screamed and tried to bite their hands when they smacked his face.

"And then—oh, gosh, this is awful—they held his mouth open and pulled out three of his teeth with a pair of pliers. The kid fainted. He was found outside his house at about midnight. He'd lost a lot of blood.

"When the ambulance arrived, they had to take Mrs. X as well. She was in a terrible state. The boy is all right now, but Mrs. X has had a proper crack-up. She won't be well for months. The two kids are going down to Cape Town next week. Some friends of mine are putting them up for a while. When Mrs. X is well enough to travel, she and X will follow them. They can't live here any more. *And I don't think I can much longer. This God-forsaken country ought to be laid waste for a few years; they ought to drive all the damn' Nazis back to Germany with whips!*"

You can't believe, when you arrive in beautiful Windhoek, that this is a town so full of Nazi plots and intrigue. It looks so innocent, with its red-roofed administration buildings, its colourful beds of flowers and its soft green hills. It is not until you have seen a Nazi torch parade march through its paved streets, winding up at the Outspan ground to listen to bilious-looking, twisted-mouth Germans whipping the young Nazis into a pathological frenzy, that you know what Windhoek really is. If the Germans ever get South-west Africa back they'll change Windhoek's face. It is not an appropriate background to their ravings.

On the Atlantic coast the atmosphere is different. It is dirty and depressing and somehow eminently suitable for Nazis. The little port of Luderitz on the edge of the desert seethed with Nazism in 1939. You could sense its tension and the fanaticism of its inhabitants the moment you walked its sandy streets. "Luderitz is where it will all begin," an administration official in Windhoek said. "You don't live in Luderitz unless you're one hundred per cent Nazi."

Most of the Nazis were employed on the local diamond fields. They included the *Gauleiters* and *Ortsgruppenfuhrers* of the Sud-west Bund. And this was where the Nazis were attempting to build a Bantu fifth

column. They had met with little success, so far as I could make out. They told the natives that Hitler would arrive in South-west Africa "within a year or even less". (This was in March, 1939, so that converted Bantus should have been completely disillusioned by this time.) The Nazis were careful not to mention Hitler's racial theories to prospective members of the Bantu Nazi fifth column, but promises of independence after a German victory were freely given. Most of the natives dismissed Nazi promises with nothing more than a shrug of their shiny black shoulders. But a few of them believed that while possibly nothing would be gained by subscribing to Nazi plans, there was a virtual certainty that nothing would be lost. There was a belief that, at worst, the Germans couldn't treat them any worse than they had been by the South Africans. Germans, Englishmen, Afrikaaners were all white men. And if one particular white nation offered an improvement on the *status quo*, it was all right with them.

In Luderitz one quickly discovers a little-known reason why Hitler is so insistent that South-west Africa should be returned to Germany's tender care. The main reasons are, of course, obvious enough: from bases in South-west Africa offensives could be launched against the Union of South Africa, against its fabulous Rand goldfields, its busy ports. One was inclined to dismiss the Nazi desire for "living-space", and the theory that South-west Africa would solve some of the Reich's raw-material problems. The territory is virtually waterless; there are choicer agricultural lands in Africa. Mining development is limited. The mass of the 314,000 natives harbour bitter memories of massacre at the hands of the Germans at the beginning of the century. They would be likely to prove most unco-operative in any re-created German colony.

And then, in the dusty little port of Luderitz, you learn that in "irresponsible" hands South-west Africa might easily knock the bottom out of the international diamond market. Nobody has dared to estimate the diamond wealth of South-west Africa's shingle storm beaches. Precious stones and industrial diamonds are scattered along them for hundreds of miles. The mining editor of the *Johannesburg Rand Daily Mail* told me that you can fill a pocket with diamonds in less than twelve hours. *You just pick them up off the beach.*

A South African geologist said in 1927: "Diamonds have been proved to occur for more than 600 miles along the coast, and it is thus entitled to be regarded as one of the most remarkable stretches of coastline in the world."

Like other areas of Southern Afrika where diamonds are to be found, South-west Africa is prohibited territory for the adventurous fortune-hunter or individual prospector. The coast is guarded by patrolling aircraft, by speedy naval launches and by roving police units. Few strangers along these beaches manage to escape close scrutiny. To be caught digging—even with your hands—is sufficient to warrant criminal prosecution. It is no use at all to plead ignorance of the fact that it is prohibited territory. The Union Government publishes geological surveys nearly every year, clearly indicating areas where digging is not allowed. To illustrate the point: On a fishing trip to Lake Kosi, in Zululand, I was questioned by police when local natives had reported they had seen me digging—for worms! The Lake Kosi area is largely unin-



habited by white men, but three policemen travelled twenty miles through thick bush from an inland post to interview me. Only my hook and line and an abundance of fresh-looking fish apparently saved me. In any case, I was firmly told to move on. "You can't dig here for worms," one of them said. "You might dig up a diamond, and De Beers would hate that!"

De Beers Consolidated Mines, which operates in the great diamond fields of Kimberley, and the mines of the Belgian Congo virtually control the price of diamonds all over the world. Production is naturally limited to maintain an attractive price and to keep shareholders happy. The diamond companies are properly dismayed when diamondiferous land is discovered somewhere outside their own concessions. Small independent producers are tolerated so long as they abide by the rules of monopoly control. It would be bad business if areas as rich as Kimberley or the Congo were to be exploited. And the trouble is that South-west Africa may be richer than Kimberley and the Congo put together. De Beers and the Congo companies realize perhaps better than any that Hitler is no respecter of monopolies. Which is a good economic reason why Hitler must never dig his hands into South-west Africa's beaches.

The war and the failure to revolt in April, 1939, did not seem to strike a death-blow at Nazi morale in South-west Africa. If anything, the Germans were cockier than ever. And the tolerance of the Union Government has not helped matters. For several months after the outbreak of war the Nazis were virtually ignored. A few of the unnaturalized, more violent Nazi leaders were interned. Police surveillance was closer. But they still Heiled Hitler; the "cultural" book-stores in the towns still prominently displayed hundreds of Nazi books and propaganda pamphlets, and "social" gatherings and activities continued unabated. In December, 1939, nearly four months after Germany had been at war with the Union of South Africa, it was decided to raid the headquarters of Nazi organizations in South-west African towns. Masses of documents were taken from the offices of the Deutsche Sud-west Bund and the German youth organizations. Gradually the Union Government interned the majority of the unnaturalized German men. But the 6,000 Germans who were either British subjects or Union nationals were left untouched. Large numbers of them were as viciously Nazi as those who had not taken out naturalization papers. It was not until March, 1942, that the Union Government deprived South-west African Germans of their Union nationality by an act of Parliament. This legislation gave the authorities a wider latitude in their internment policy. They were now able to pounce down on any man or woman of German origin in the mandate, whether he or she had become naturalized or not. But there was still a reluctance on the part of the Government to intern Germans on a large scale, just as in the Union itself thousands of pro-Nazi Afrikaaners were still permitted to act subversively as members of the Ossewa Brandwag.

But much more annoying to the Germans than the scattered internments—which made so many of the younger Nazis regard themselves as martyrs—was the confiscation of radio receivers. For years before the war and for some months after it the Nazis would tune in to hear the "Dear Friends in Africa" programme broadcast by a giant short-wave

transmitter in Zeesen, Germany. They would get all the latest news from the Fatherland, and even personal messages from relatives. Zeesen would continually remind the South-west African Germans that Hitler hadn't forgotten them, that as soon as the little bother in Europe had been cleared up the Fuehrer would pay more attention to Africa. These broadcasts helped greatly to maintain a high morale. Unfortunately, the confiscation of radios could not keep from the Germans news of Allied defeats. The loss of the *Repulse* and the *Prince of Wales* in Far Eastern waters, the first victories of Marshal Erwin Rommel in Egypt, the stories of Germany's U-boat successes have all been joyously celebrated in the homes and meeting-places of Nazis in South-west Africa.

The fact is that the Nazis are waiting. They know now that Union forces are at full strength and could put down any rebellion without much trouble. But they have not given up hope. The arms they smuggled into South-west Africa have never been discovered, except in small quantities. Machine-guns, rifles, hand grenades and other small arms are still hidden on the farms and in the cellars of private homes. And they still expect to use them. They are patiently waiting for a Japanese sea and air attack on Southern Africa. In the meantime the Nazis who fled across the northern frontier into Portuguese Angola in 1939 are now making frequent trips back into South-west African territory. In the native reserves to the north they are making frantic promises of freedom to the Bantu tribes. They are not asking for their support in any armed uprising; they merely want to insure their "friendly neutrality". What impression the Nazis have made may never be known. My suspicion is that the greater number of Bantus are quite determined that the Germans must never come back.

Some of these tribes in South-west Africa had a terrible time of it under the Germans—which is the best reason of all why neither Hitler nor any other German ruler should ever be allowed to govern a colony again. Not even the Boers have a record so blemished with ruthlessness and brutality. The great Ovamba tribe was the only one that was never bothered to any extent, but only because they happened to live in the unexplored northern regions of the colony. The Hottentots, small-framed, yellow little men, were robbed and hounded by German settlers. They revolted and many of them were killed.

But it was the Herreros, finely built, intelligent people, whom the Germans practically wiped out. The Herreros were 90,000 souls when the Germans first arrived in force in 1884. They were only 15,000 by 1907. They had rebelled because the German settlers and traders had forced them by trickery to give up their huge herds of cattle. Marshal Goering's father became South-west Africa's first Governor in 1888. The settlers to whom he was responsible demanded that they be permitted to grab as much cattle as they could lay their hands on. Dr. Goering obligingly gave them the word, and told the Herreros to consider themselves a conquered people and submit to the German system of rule.

The German traders swindled the Herreros out of their cattle, forcing them to accept in exchange old clothes, small quantities of coffee and tobacco. When the Herreros refused to sell, the Germans would dump their goods in the kraal and return a few weeks later with German policemen, charging that the natives had refused to go through with the deal.

Slowly, but very surely, all the best cattle passed into the hands of the German farmers. By 1904 the Herreros, an aristocratic, cattle-owning tribe, found themselves a starving, economically insolvent nation. They rose up to avenge themselves. It cost the Germans £23,000,000 and 2,000 German lives to stamp out the rebellion. The Herreros were broken, cut to ribbons and detribalized. They fled in disorder in 1907 after waging a stout-hearted, four-year war against their oppressors. They retreated into the burning Kalahari desert, where they knew the Germans would not follow them. But many of their children were abandoned or lost in the haste to get away from the armed settlers. These orphans were picked up by the Germans and grew up to be their slaves. And the Herreros in the desert often perished. They either starved or were killed off by the poisoned arrows of the wily little Bushmen who resented their intrusion.

Today the Herrero tribe is beginning to build itself up again. Many of them are still the servants of the white man. But thousands more live up in the relative freedom of the northern reserves. What these Herreros think of the Germans and of their plans to get South-west Africa back is strictly unprintable. They have never forgotten that massacre. Most of them hate all white men. Many of them refuse to learn English or Afrikaans in order that their contact with the white man should be limited. In the rural areas of the South-west a Herrero will often run away when he sees a white man approaching him. He is fearful. He can never be sure that the white man does not want to kill him or steal his cattle, or both. He curses that day in 1884 when Adolf Luderitz, a Bremen tobacco merchant, landed in the district then called Angra Pequena (now Luderitz harbour) and hoisted the German flag.

## XVII

### THE GESTAPO IN LOURENÇO MARQUES

IN THE SUMMER OF 1934 ERNST WILHELM BOHLE, CHIEF OF THE NAZI Overseas Organization, gave special attention to Africa. A huge map of the continent hung from one of the walls of his Berlin office, and the German Colonial Society was continually supplying him with information gathered by their "scientific missions" abroad.

Bohle's function as head of the Overseas Organization was to turn German consulates and embassies into espionage centres and to keep a meticulous check on the activities and opinions of German citizens living in foreign countries. It was a job that required time and patience.

But Bohle came to rapid decisions over Southern Africa. He knew that part of the world well. Born in Bradford, England, the son of a German professor, he was educated in South Africa, played soccer and cricket and spoke English faultlessly. In 1920 his father sent him to Germany to study at the universities of Berlin and Cologne. He heard Adolf Hitler make a speech in 1931 and was so impressed that he joined the National Socialist Party immediately. Today he is one of the few top Nazis Hitler really trusts.

Bohle decided that Lourenço Marques, capital of Portuguese East Africa, should become Nazi headquarters in Southern Africa. The former German colony of South-west Africa, under mandate to the Union of South Africa, would perhaps have been a more obvious choice because of the large German population there. But in time of war South-west Africa would be vigorously controlled by an army of occupation from the Union.

Portuguese East Africa was likely to be neutral territory, the only neutral territory of such strategic importance in the entire southern half of Africa below the bulge. It was a place from which activities could be carried on whether there was peace or war. Bohle was aware of these facts. He did not have to thumb through the German Colonial Society's dossier to be convinced, though the Society had gone to a great deal of trouble and expense to reach the same conclusions. The Society was primarily scientific and economic, dedicated to the planning and exploitation of territories abroad when they fell under the heel of the German Army. It was linked closely to the Overseas Organization—and its members were as interested in the fertility of foreign soil for Nazi infiltration as they were interested in it for the raising of crops.

Lourenço Marques was as nearly perfect a place for the Nazis as could be found in all Southern Africa. It was a port of great importance. It handled nearly all the imports and exports of the prosperous Transvaal province of the Union, as well as the trade of Portuguese East Africa. From the Union—where coastal resorts are as uninspiring as they are in England—and even from the far-away Belgian Congo, wealthy business men and brokers and farmers flocked to Lourenço Marques to spend their vacations. For Lourenço Marques is like Monte Carlo. It is as cosmopolitan; it has a wonderful climate, a magnificent Casino, golden sand beaches and hotels and villas that look as if they had been transplanted bodily from the French Riviera. It is the playground of Southern Africa. A delightful old town of red and white, it has no equal for charm, entertainment and historic interest along the entire coastline of the Dark Continent.

Tropical palms wave lazily along its broad avenues; the Vasco Da Gama Gardens, a gay and colourful tribute to the intrepid Portuguese seaman's pioneer voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, is one of Lourenço Marques' high spots.

Lourenço Marques' summer carnivals attract thousands of tourists from the Union. At night the town is aglow with coloured lamps and full of music played by the dozens of little string orchestras.

Thus the Nazis figured they would find a wealth of information falling from the loose mouths of tourists from South Africa. Lourenço Marques' population of Portuguese citizens is frantically jealous of the prosperity of the Union, something that Bohle believed would help his plans for Africa. The Portuguese is jealous, too, of the way the South Africans govern themselves by electing members to the Cape Town House of Parliament. The Portuguese is governed by a Governor-General appointed by the Lisbon Government. He has no hope of dominion status. As a colonist his progress is stifled by lack of capital, for with money he could probably develop Portuguese East Africa into a territory almost as prosperous as his neighbour's. It is rich in unexploited minerals.

Grudgingly, he looks to the foreigner to introduce the capital. But British interests have been careful not to contribute to the development of industries which might compete with those in Britain's own African possessions. Before the war thirty-three per cent of Portuguese East Africa's imports came from the British Empire, fourteen per cent from Germany and only thirteen per cent from Portugal itself. Imports included iron, machinery, building materials, flour, cereals, cotton goods, timber, petrol and motor-cars. The colony exported raw cotton, sugar, copra, maize, fresh fruit and some coal. Most of these exports went to Portugal.

But by far the bigger share of Portuguese East Africa's commerce is represented in the lucrative transit trade from the Rhodesias, Nyasaland and the Transvaal. Goods from these territories flow out to the world over the railroads and through the ports of Portuguese East Africa. And it is this trade which enables the Lourenço Marques' Administration to balance its budgets. To keep the Portuguese happy the South Africans some years ago renewed with the Portuguese an agreement known as the Mozambique Convention. The South Africans agreed that Lourenço Marques should handle a minimum forty-three and a half per cent of the Transvaal's imports. The Portuguese would also undertake to provide the Transvaal with a certain number of native labourers annually for work on the Witwatersrand goldfields.

Without the Mozambique Convention, Portuguese East Africa would be a lost territory. The Convention's renewal came at a particularly strategic moment. In the late twenties Europe was alive with rumours that Germany might be compensated for the loss of its pre-war colonies. It had been suggested that the Reich might receive a mandate under the League of Nations to administer Portuguese East Africa and Angola, Portugal's West African colony. Germany's claims were based on the inability of Portugal to exploit her colonies fruitfully and the appalling corruption in Portugal's colonial administrations. Germany also said that Portugal's handling of the natives left much to be desired. These facts were true enough, even though their existence certainly did not warrant the Portuguese colonies being given to Germany. The Germans had a bad colonial record themselves.

But the Portuguese needed a rumour like this to shock them out of their misrule in Africa. Their treatment of the natives was callous as well as unintelligent and mediaeval. Their system of compulsory labour in private industry was abolished in 1926 under pressure from Britain. Today the Portuguese actually have no native policy. Private employers still get the help of police in rounding up natives to work at starvation wages. And administrative officials are still bribed by the employers to ignore charges brought by the natives. Natives who don't pay their taxes are shanghaied and sent to the Witwatersrand. And when the natives return to Portuguese East Africa, after serving the usual nine months in the mines, they find Portuguese customs officials waiting to deduct the next two years' taxes from their wages.

Germany's plans for taking over the Portuguese colonies, however, were scotched. Britain was anxious to keep Germany out of Africa.

Portugal was warned to do a little house-cleaning, and the British would keep her colonies from bankruptcy. But the Portuguese were

still far from satisfied. Despite the ancient Anglo-Portuguese alliance and British financial aid, Portugal's East African colony is still submerged by lack of money. The Portuguese regards Britain as a kind of severe guardian who is willing to see Portugal's possessions progress so far but no farther.

Thousands of Portuguese resent this attitude. And it was this resentment that Ernst Wilhelm Bohle sought to encourage. Since the outbreak of war the wisdom of Bohle's choice of Lourenço Marques as Nazi headquarters in Southern Africa has become even more apparent. Today, from the tree-studded hills behind Lourenço Marques you can see the ships sailing in packs and loaded to the decks with war materials for India and for Russia via the Persian Gulf. A continuous stream of war aid to the Russians takes this southern route from the United States Atlantic coast and round the Cape of Good Hope. More tanks and guns and 'planes reach the battling Red Armies by way of Southern Africa than by the Arctic route, which is open to shipping only during the summer months.

The first apparent sign of Nazi interest in Portuguese East Africa did not appear until the summer of 1938. It was then that the fair-headed, bronzed young men of Bohle's Overseas Organization could be seen rubbing bare shoulders with visitors from the Union on the Polana beach at Lourenço Marques. Handsome fellows of high German breeding, they conducted themselves with impeccable good manners, spoke English with scarcely the trace of an accent, and scrupulously avoided the stiffness of the Prussian social code. They made a good impression on the South African stockbrokers and their wives and daughters.

Unfortunately, they were only the periphery of the German espionage service Berlin had been diligently building in East Africa since 1934. Behind them was the full and deadly power of the German Foreign Office which housed the Overseas Organization, the Gestapo and its sub-sections, and the "scientific" German Colonial Society.

Today, their jobs finished, most of those bronzed young men have been transferred to South America. Since the outbreak of war Johannesburg's stockbrokers, and even their wives and daughters, have not been anxious to be observed with Germans on the Polana beach; not that the attraction was anything but harmless, politically speaking, as far as the South African ladies were concerned.

The Germans, however, were not lolling on the beach for their health. Their task was to make every possible contact with influential visitors from the Union of South Africa; to learn of the latest political intrigues in the Union, the "have-you-heard" titbits of information regarding construction of new highways, railroads, airports and the possible line-up of South Africa's political factions in time of crisis.

Their weapons were the cocktails tossed down the throats of flattered girls and middle-aged women, and the compliments bestowed upon rich South African business men whose wives no longer looked goggle-eyed at their financial accomplishments.

Sitting behind a heavy mahogany desk in the offices of the German Consul in Lourenço Marques was the man to whom these German boys were directly responsible. His name was Emile Hanke. He was a

reliable Gestapo agent, who had worked in Spain under Kurt Wermke, assistant to Bohle in the Overseas Organization. He had arrived in Portuguese East Africa in January, 1937, direct from Spain, where he had helped most productively in a round-up of German citizens for service as petty spies or for military duties in General Franco's insurgent army.

Hanke, a tall, thin product of a German middle-class family, was ostensibly a subordinate of the German Consul, a man named Raediger, but actually he supervised every routine act of Raediger and his terrified staff.

Hanke had brought a letter with him addressed to the Governor of Portuguese East Africa. It was personally signed by Bohle. It gave him diplomatic status as Berlin's representative of the Harbour Service Department of the German Foreign Office. The Harbour Service Department is a cover-up name for the Nazi secret service. Its offices are in the building of the Foreign Office, and its expenses are shared by the Overseas Organization and the Gestapo. Its activities are a closely guarded secret, and its name is rarely uttered for fear of a ruthless investigation of the utterer.

But a rough idea of the Harbour Service Department's sinister activities in foreign cities was in the files of most European Governments by 1938. Neither the Lisbon Government nor the Governor of Portuguese East Africa had been informed that Hanke was to take up his post in Lourenço Marques.

Apparently the Nazis dared not take the risk of Hanke being refused diplomatic status and wanted to get him on the job before the Portuguese Government could ask any awkward questions. For Lisbon was quite aware of the functions of a Harbour Service representative. The Portuguese knew from Spain's experience that while he was concerned with the arrival and departure of German shipping, and worked closely with the German trade attaché, he also showed a healthy interest in the details of docks and harbour works, naval installations and the possibilities (and plans, if any) of expanding existing facilities for shipping.

The Harbour Service man was invariably a born snoop who poked his nose into other people's harbour business, bribed officials and workers lavishly and often managed to gain access to information of a secret nature. Moreover, he was responsible to the Gestapo, not to the departments of the Foreign Office. He had an annoying habit of card-indexing German citizens living in foreign countries, and of forcing them to help in his snooping on pain of being "returned to Germany" under somewhat unhappy circumstances.

This would not have proved so bothersome to foreign Governments were it not for the fact that distraught Germans, hounded by the Harbour Service agent, frequently appealed to the local authorities for help against Nazi persecution. It posed an embarrassing diplomatic question which most Governments didn't care to answer.

Were the Government to protest to Berlin, it would carry with it the implication that the Harbour Service Department was functioning far beyond its original and official duties. That in turn would have undoubtedly brought a violent counter-protest from the Nazis, irate at being found out and determined to lie their way back to diplomatic

respectability with a fistful of phony documents. An abrupt decline in international relations would be the inevitable result.

Thus Lisbon received official notice of Hanke's arrival in Lourenço Marques the day he presented his credentials to the Governor. Lisbon Government circles were more hurt than perturbed. At that time, in 1937, Portugal was doing a fair job in transporting German and Italian war supplies from Portuguese ports to General Franco's Fascists. The age-old Anglo-Portuguese alliance was temporarily, at least, a hollow, outmoded theory; and Lisbon's relations with Berlin were the best they had been in twenty years.

But the arrival of a Harbour Service agent in a Portuguese colony could mean only one thing—infiltration. Hanke's presence in Portuguese East Africa was a slap in the face for Portugal's recent pro-Axis policy. But it was too late to effect a radical change in attitude towards the Spanish Civil War. The Lisbon Government feared the consequences of closing Portuguese ports to Axis ships bringing war materials for Fascist Spain more than it resented the activities of a Harbour Service man in Lourenço Marques.

Portugal's delicate position on the Iberian Peninsula gave her a very natural excuse in supporting General Franco's rebels. The Portuguese have always feared absorption by the Spaniards. It was quite evident that Dr. Oliviera Salazar's dictatorship would be wrecked if Spanish democracy were permitted to raise its head. The Nazis, moreover, had done a reasonably good job in Lisbon of convincing the Salazar Government of Britain's inability to come to Portugal's aid in time of war.

The Nazis, however, did not include Portugal on their list of countries which they expected to act in pro-Axis fashion under *all* circumstances. The British Intelligence and Diplomatic Services during 1937 were attempting to high-pressure Lisbon.

While Neville Chamberlain was unimpressed with the picture of Portugal as a highway for Axis war supplies to General Franco (he believed it was merely sound business on Portugal's part), he was none the less anxious to preserve the spirit of the Anglo-Portuguese alliance and to prevent Portugal from openly or covertly joining the Axis camp.

It was not until June, 1937, that Chamberlain's Foreign Office was informed that Salazar and Franco were planning a Lisbon-Salamanca Axis complementary to the Rome-Berlin Axis. Britain had not bargained for that. In November, 1937, a new British Ambassador was appointed to Lisbon. His name was Sir Esmond Ovey. He was a man of character and intelligence, and capable, if anyone was, of moving Salazar away from Hitler and Mussolini.

His first move was to suggest that a British military mission be allowed to visit Lisbon for discussions with the Portuguese General Staff on the possibilities of military co-operation in time of war. Particular emphasis was laid on the vulnerability of Portugal's overseas possessions, and Britain's close proximity to them.

Sir Esmond Ovey persuaded Dr. Salazar to make a speech emphasizing his love for Britain and his respect for the Anglo-Portuguese alliance. Copies of the speech, which was never reported in the Press, were circulated among political circles in Britain. But Salazar turned down the offer of a British military mission. The Nazis in Lisbon had



gone to work. And Mussolini had sent his serious objections by way of the Italian Ambassador.

The British Government announced that the mission had only been "postponed", that no date "had yet been fixed". But they were not happy days for the British Foreign Office. It was felt that Salazar's flat rejection of the proposed British mission was evidence of Portugal's desire to break off close relations with Britain and to strengthen her ties with the Axis.

Sir Esmond Ovey pulled his last trick out of the diplomatic bag. He conferred with Salazar for three hours. He told him that Chamberlain had no quarrel with Portugal throwing open its ports to Axis shipping, and that the British Government realized fully that Salazar's regime was dependent upon a Fascist victory in Spain. Portugal's status as an independent sovereign state, however, would soon deteriorate if it allowed itself to be dictated to by the Wilhelmstrasse. Ovey assured Salazar that Portugal had powerful friends in Britain who were uneasy at Germany's influence in Lisbon and who were especially perturbed at his objection to the visit of a British military mission.

The inference was not lost on Dr. Salazar. He vigorously denied that he made decisions according to the wishes of Hitler. An economist by profession, he related the close economic ties with Britain, and emphasized the excellent trade position between his country and Britain.

Sir Esmond Ovey then talked at length about the defences of the Portuguese African colonies. He showed Salazar the reports of the British Consul at Lourenço Marques in which the activities of the Nazis had been emphasized. He produced Foreign Office documents proving the extent to which the Nazis had infiltrated in the former German colony of South-west Africa, which borders Portuguese Angola.

Finally, he showed Salazar photostatic copies of documents to which the British Intelligence Service had gained access in Berlin. These documents revealed in full the methods Germany was using to discover the strength of defences in all the African colonies.

Salazar wavered. To clinch the deal, Sir Esmond Ovey informed him that a German named Emile Hanke was already at work in Lourenço Marques. That settled matters. The British military mission arrived to work out the details of a mutual defence plan for British and Portuguese colonies in Africa in February, 1938. But the results were not very encouraging. The Portuguese Army staff was reluctant to give away the secrets of their defence system, although the British hinted broadly that they knew them, anyway.

After a week of uncertainty, the mission degenerated into an exchange of bare outlines of defence plans. Neither side had the other's confidence. The Nazis in Lisbon, with whom members of the Portuguese Army Staff were friendly, saw to it that the British went home empty-handed. And the Portuguese saw to it that the British were treated with great respect and politeness and were loaded with assurances that more detailed plans might be discussed at some future date. Thus, Dr. Salazar didn't slam the door, but left it discreetly ajar.

In Southern Africa, Emile Hanke was virtually given a free hand. Since 1937 he has performed his treacherous duties with skill and ruthlessness. He has inspired fear in the hearts of hundreds of German

citizens living in Portuguese East Africa and neighbouring South Africa. Dozens of Portuguese officials, business men and private citizens are pressed under his thumb.

## XVIII

### BAND SQUARE STORY

SIGNOR ALBERTO CAMPOS WAS THE EXPANSIVE, PERSPIRING PROPRIETOR of an open-air café on Band Square. He had walked its mosaic pavements for twenty years. He had become one of the tourist sights of Lourenço Marques. He could be seen all day and most of the night fawning over his patrons, shouting a continual stream of good Portuguese abuse at his staff of black waiters. He looked like a Hollywood caricature of a Portuguese café proprietor, with his wet black hair hanging down over his brow in dripping ringlets, his voluminous face glistening under the lights. His pudgy fingers were decorated with thick-banded gold and diamond rings and his legs were knock-kneed and heavy.

There was nothing sinister about Alberto Campos. Years ago he had owned a café on one of Lisbon's bohemian squares. He had sold it to his brother when his wife contracted tuberculosis and had moved out to Lourenço Marques. Signora Campos, nicely padded like her husband, sat sullenly behind the cash register, eying the waiters suspiciously when they delivered the cheques and the customers' money.

Band Square, lined with trees, sunny during the day and decorated with hundreds of little coloured lamps at night, was Lourenço Marques' boulevard. Like its counterparts in Europe, from noon till the early hours it was the clearing-house of rumour, the centre of gossip. Signor Campos' customers were the Portuguese residents—officials and private citizens—the crews of foreign vessels and the tourists.

Nobody had ever known Signor Campos to take a more than average interest in international affairs. Nobody had ever heard him grumble about the state of the world or even about the taxes he had to pay. But in 1938 Signor Campos began to acquire the reputation of a sinister international figure, dangerous to be seen talking to. For his customers were becoming predominantly German. They were the young Germans from the Polana beach, the German officers of German ships, assistants in the German Consulate, and the German merchants and traders resident in the town.

Unquestionably, so the story went, Signor Campos was in the pay of the German Government. He was the contact man between the Gestapo and the pro-Fascist elements in the Portuguese Administration. He took secret messages from Nazi agents disguised as German seamen and delivered them to Emile Hanke. He listened to the conversations of his Portuguese customers and made a thorough report on anti-Axis individuals, giving one copy to the Portuguese Quislings and another to the German Consulate. Nobody had ever seen him enter the offices of the German Consulate. Of course not. To allay suspicion he sent his reports through the mails.

A visiting newspaperman from the Union of South Africa, struck by the European atmosphere of café life in Band Square, wanted to get a colour story. He asked Signor Campos to jot down a few facts about his life and about the famous people who had sat in his rickety wicker chairs and sipped Martinis. Signor Campos, flattered at the thought of seeing his name in print, was unhappily forced to murmur, however, that he couldn't write.

But that merely added to the suspicions of Band Square's gossipers. His story about not being able to write was a cover-up for his activities. He was, after all, a perfect choice as a spy. He was popular. His customers were regular. He was the tourists' delight. He was as colourful as Lourenço Marques itself.

Whether Signor Campos was a Nazi agent or not, Lourenço Marques was in a spy-hunting mood. Band Square in recent months, in fact since Hanke's arrival, had become a place of hushed political dialogue, of furtive glances over the shoulder, of vicious rumour and scurrilous secrets, of suspicion of strangers. It was as cosmopolitan as Tangiers, and, the rumour-mongers would impart behind the backs of their hands, as full of spies.

But there was at least one man who was convinced that Signor Campos was no spy. He was a middle-aged Portuguese Customs official. He had come to Portuguese East Africa on the same boat as Signor Campos. He was well informed on what was going on in Lourenço Marques' administration circles. He had a nephew, a secret anti-Fascist, in one of the administrative offices. He claimed to know exactly what Emile Hanke was up to; and he described to me in minute detail the circumstances of Hanke's arrival. His information checked pretty closely with mine, and so I was inclined to believe him when he told me the story of Kurt Wasserman, Signor Campos' head waiter.

It was one of those warm, windless evenings on Band Square. The cafés were thronged with the usual crowd. A party of British tourists from a cruise ship were noisily enjoying themselves. The Germans sat quietly drinking beer at Signor Campos' tables. But Campos' familiar figure was nowhere to be seen.

"Where's our Portuguese Nazi spy?" I asked.

My friend grinned. He was an easy-going fellow, seldom prone to dissertations on international affairs. The most alarming stories of Nazi infiltration into Africa, which he had made his home, had long ceased to anger him. He lacked faith in his Government's ability to resist German schemes for the colonies and the mother country. He would read his letters from Portugal and shrug his shoulders hopelessly after reciting some piece of news about Germany's latest blackmail of Portugal. He believed that the Portuguese ruling clique comprised a nasty balance of Fascists, anxious to do Hitler's bidding—men so corrupt that they would sell their country's best interests for a promise of a Government position that carried a pension—and a miserable handful of ineffectual liberals afraid to oppose their political enemies.

"Campos is afraid to show his face tonight. They got Kurt early this morning," he replied.

"Who is Kurt and who are 'they'?" I asked.

"Kurt *was*"—he corrected his tense with meaningful emphasis—"a

foolhardy young man who didn't know when to hold his tongue. And they—they are Emile Hanke and his gang.

"Kurt turned himself into a spy—an anti-Nazi spy—at nobody's behest but his own. I believe the romance of it attracted him. God knows, he conducted himself like a schoolboy. He never knew how to cover up his trails, though that would have been difficult enough with those bastards following him. He left Germany four years ago. Hitler didn't kick him out and he didn't have to go. He was the adventurous sort. He went to Portugal, took a job as a stevedore, and then came out here as a cook on a German boat.

"Signor Campos gave him the job because he was blond and Aryan-looking, washed regularly, didn't drink and attracted the female customers. When the Nazis came out here Kurt seemed to realize, probably for the first time, that they were swine. He had left Germany before Hitler gained full control and apparently had noticed the change that had taken place in the minds of his contemporaries. After a while he gave vent to a lot of pent-up emotions. Maybe it was something to do with his glands—I don't know—but glands are important things, especially in Germans. They are the damndest, most juvenile, intensely cocky people I ever set eyes on.

"This fellow, Kurt Wasserman, began to talk. He told the Portuguese that Hitler had Portuguese East Africa on his list. He said Emile Hanke was due to become their *Gauleiter*.

"He said the Nazis were stealing secret documents from the Governor's office. That was absurd. The Nazis don't have to steal anything. They can get what they want for a few escudos, or a few threats. Kurt kept crowds of Portuguese boulevardiers interested in his stories about Germany, Hitler and the concentration camps. He used some frightful words about Uncle Adolf. He was so excited when he spoke, his eyes flashed so angrily, that some of Signor Campos' customers reported him to the police for scaremongering.

"But after a while they began to believe him. He told the same stories over and over again, and always somehow managed to keep the details the same. Kurt seemed to feel he was very important—a kind of one-man propaganda bureau. He wrote reports on what he thought were the activities of Emile Hanke (he was right most of the time, too) to the British Consul. Kurt had seen Hanke's kind at work in Portugal. I never found out whether the British Consul took any notice of his reports.

"Last September Kurt took a trip to Johannesburg. He got in touch with some refugees from Germany. He was introduced to an official of the Zionist organization. When Kurt explained that he was an anti-Nazi German living in Lourenço Marques and that something ought to be done about the Nazis there, the official suddenly became frightened and told him to leave. I don't know why, but I expect the Zionists didn't want to mix themselves up in something that might hit the front pages of South African newspapers.

"Then he went to see Jabotinsky's crowd—the New Zionists. They were more sympathetic. They had just built up a little band of tough Jewish lads who had beaten up a bunch of Boer Fascists. The New Zionist leader was impressed with Kurt's story. Kurt told him that



A RURAL SCENE IN MADAGASCAR.

(Photo Three Lions.)



*[Photo European.*

STREET SCENE, ELIZABETHVILLE, BELGIAN CONGO.

there were at least 200 young Nazis in Lourenço Marques and that if 300 young Jews visited the city well armed with knuckle-dusters and truncheons, they would make quite an impression on Emile Hanke, and the Portuguese as well.

"The Zionist leader promised to send the boys on a pleasure trip to the Portuguese East African coast the following month. Kurt went back to Lourenço Marques feeling very much the underground, anti-Fascist leader. He became even more outspoken against the Nazis, and told lurid stories of Hitler's childhood, including the one that the Fuehrer is anti-Semitic because he was once kicked in the stomach by a Jewish schoolmate.

"The month went by, but the boys from Johannesburg didn't show up. After two more weeks Kurt sent a telegram to the New Zionist leader, but got no reply. Worse still, one of Hanke's men in Johannesburg had informed his chief of the New Zionist plan. Hanke instructed Consul Raediger to file a protest with the Union Government's Justice Department, emphasizing the three-pointed complications between the Union, Portugal and Germany that could arise if the Jewish lads should pay Lourenço Marques a visit.

"A Boer in the Justice Department sent a nice letter to the New Zionists, saying that a certain scheme had been reported, and that he hoped it didn't in any way involve them. The Zionist leader frantically cancelled all arrangements, and ignored Kurt's telegram. Then he went out to investigate the rank and file to see who had rattled.

"The Justice Department sent a letter to the German Consul in Johannesburg, asking him to inform his colleague in Lourenço Marques that it could find no traces of any such Jewish plot as he had described, and that it was quite sure none was in prospect. My nephew, who has seen copies of the letters, says that's just about what they said, word for word.

"Emile Hanke sent a long report to Berlin on Kurt's activities. The Gestapo traced Kurt's parents to Heidelberg, where his father owned a beer garden.

"About six weeks later Kurt got a letter from a neighbour of his father in Heidelberg. It said that he'd better stop whatever he was doing because his father had been sent to Dachau and his mother to Oranienburg.

"Kurt—either out of bravado or courage—ignored the letter and planned to take another trip to Johannesburg. But when he applied for a visa from the South African Consulate he was told to go to hell. That's what the fellow actually said. But what would you expect from a Boer! Too many of them are bound up with the Nazis in some way, especially the big dumb swine they send here!

"Kurt felt himself trapped. He lost all faith in his anti-Fascist friends in the Union. He resigned himself to a single-handed counter-espionage campaign in Lourenço Marques. He foolishly went to see all kinds of dubious people in the Portuguese administration. Some of them were afraid of him, and threatened to take away his working permit if he made trouble. Others merely reported him to Raediger. Somehow the fellow managed to contact all the wrong people.

"Later Kurt's activities reached Signor Campos' ears. They would

sit down, and above the squeal of Campos' protests Kurt would deliver long, passionate treatises on the need for kicking the Nazis out of the town. But what the hell! What with Campos speaking English with a Portuguese accent, and Kurt speaking it with a German accent, and the two of them so damned excited, neither of them knew what the other was talking about, anyway.

"Campos doesn't know anything about the Nazis. All he gives a damn about is his business. He said Kurt would ruin business with his notoriety. He didn't want to dismiss Kurt, because Kurt still attracted the female customers—with his blond hair.

"But a few days ago Campos got a visit from a Nazi who threatened him with the destruction of his café and his blasted wicker chairs and tables if he didn't fire Kurt. Strangely enough, Campos didn't seem to be frightened. He reported the incident to the police; not that that did any good, since Emile Hanke gives our Chief quite a sizable sum each month. And anyhow, the Chief gets his orders from the Governor, who gets his from Lisbon, which gets its from Berlin.

"Signor Campos told Kurt what the Nazis threatened to do, and then went off to pray. Kurt was either frightened or he didn't want any harm to come to Campos. For two months he kept his mouth shut and sulkily went about his work. Campos' customers missed his stories, and the rumour circulated that Campos was in the pay of the Nazis and had threatened to fire Kurt if he gossiped. The café remained intact. But little by little his customers were crowded out by Hitler's young tourists.

"But Kurt, apparently surprised at his own safety, believed the Nazis were bluffing. One day he asked Campos for a week off (he said he felt tired) and left by car for Johannesburg. He got across the frontier without any trouble—you know how easy it is. He went to see the New Zionist fellow again. But every time he called the Zionist was never in.

"He got back here four days ago. Hanke either knew or guessed where he had been. That 5000-ton German coal-ship sailed this morning. Kurt was aboard."

## XIX

### BASE FOR OPERATIONS

KURT WASSERMAN'S WAS THE FIRST KNOWN CASE IN PORTUGUESE EAST Africa of a German citizen's involuntary return to Germany. Others followed. In March, 1939, a German merchant named Franz Heinkel, who owned a curio shop in Lourenço Marques' bustling Rua Consiglieri Pedroso, picked up some information about a mission of German naval and commercial shipping technicians to Lourenço Marques.

With the secret backing of some Portuguese business men, Heinkel took a trip to Pretoria with a long report for the Union's Defence Minister, Oswald Pirow. Balked by red tape and the lack of an introductory letter, Heinkel only managed to see a minor official, who happened to be an Afrikaner. Heinkel was too much of an anti-Nazi to convince the official of the importance of his information. He left his name and address. Nobody in the Union Government but that one official knew



that he had been to Pretoria. But four weeks after his return to Lourenço Marques Emile Hanke went to work.

Franz Heinkel disappeared. His little curio shop was thick with dust when a week later Portuguese police broke in and found Heinkel's diary, which the Nazis had carelessly failed to dispose of.

The mission to which Heinkel had referred in his report to the Union Government was another diplomatic trick—like the sudden arrival of Emile Hanke—that the Nazis had sprung on the Portuguese without warning. The German Labour Front's "Strength Through Joy" Department had sent 150 German youths on a trip around the African continent. One of the ports of call was Lourenço Marques. They all possessed visas for Portuguese colonies given to them without question by the Portuguese Consul in Berlin. Among them were fourteen shipping experts. The German Consul in Lourenço Marques persuaded the Governor to grant them some sort of official status. They were received by the Governor. Banquets were held in their honour. And two days after their arrival the Governor received word from Lisbon that the fourteen Nazis should be taken without delay on a conducted tour of Lourenço Marques' harbour installations.

Lourenço Marques boasts a good port. There was every reason for German interest in it. It can handle vessels of deep draught in the wide, calm bay, and at its docksides. The Portuguese are particularly proud of the ferro-concrete wharves, which cost £2,500,000 and run the waterfront for nearly a mile. About 6,000 tons of cargo are handled daily. Thirty electric cranes swing their iron arms to and fro all day and part of the night. These facilities have been extended during the war.

The German experts were accompanied on their tour by Portuguese naval men and Emile Hanke, who, as a Harbour Service agent, was fulfilling an official duty openly for the first time. They spent nine days inspecting the port, time enough to draft the most detailed plans. They pumped Portuguese officials for information on any proposed extension of the wharves. They were told that port improvements depended almost entirely on the growth of mining and industry in the Union of South Africa.

The Germans were fully aware that the British mission to Lisbon in 1937 had discussed with the Portuguese General Staff the possibility of enlarging Lourenço Marques' port facilities. The British recognized that in time of war South Africa's huge deposits of strategic metals would be needed in British war production factories. Lourenço Marques would therefore have to handle much of the shipping required to transport these metals to Britain. It was one of the few problems raised by the British in which the Portuguese had shown some interest and had promised to consider. The British Foreign Office had already tipped off a London firm of engineers that the Portuguese might be receptive to a proposal to extend the harbour at Lourenço Marques.

It was suggested that the engineers might be wise if they offered to do some surveying in Lourenço Marques free of charge. The engineers did their surveying and were working out costs when the Nazis appeared on the scene. The Nazis stepped in with miraculous timing. The Portuguese had as yet made no commitments with the British, though preliminary negotiations had been going on behind closed doors for weeks.

The German mission offered a deal which was much more attractive to the Portuguese. The Germans pretended they were ignorant of British efforts to negotiate a contract, and the Portuguese officials were interested sufficiently in the Nazi offer to compare it with the British proposals and in the presence of the Germans to drop supposedly confidential details of the British plan.

The Portuguese, notoriously inept business men, thought they held the aces. They agreed that the British offered better materials and superior workmanship. But the Germans offered to do the job more cheaply. Payment was to be made over a period of ten years by barter agreement with the Lisbon Government. The Germans made no mention of the kinds of goods they wanted from Portugal. And the Portuguese were too flushed with their cleverness in driving a hard bargain to ask, and too full of their own importance to realize that the Nazi offer was designed to increase Portugal's economic indebtedness to Germany, thus bringing the Portuguese gradually under the shadow of Axis power politics. But primarily the Portuguese were too unimaginative to realize that the Germans wanted to improve Lourenço Marques' port facilities for Germany when in Hitler's good time Portugal and her empire would fall under Germany's heel. A naval base, especially for U-boats, was what intrigued the Nazis about Lourenço Marques. The port already had one 150,000-ton dry dock capable of handling small vessels and submarines up to 1500 tons.

The German mission also showed some interest in Beira, Portuguese port connected by rail to the Rhodesias. Garlipp, the German Consul in Beira, received the mission and fawned over it for two days. He was a Nazi Party comrade under Hanke's orders. Owing to the small number of German citizens residing in Beira, his activities were limited to the important task of "educating" Portuguese harbour officials, keeping a close watch on the state of the transit trade between Beira and the Rhodesias, and of informing Hanke of changes in port facilities.

Beira's harbour is smaller than that of Lourenço Marques. Many vessels anchor about 150 yards from the shore. They are loaded and unloaded from anchorage by barges towed by steam tugs. A £2,500,000 harbour has been built by agreement with the British during the past ten years. The town of Beira, built on sand, is a popular holiday resort for the Rhodesians, most of whom are particularly impressed by the good golf links.

British influence in Beira is considerable. The business community is largely British, while two of the three banks are British. Herr Garlipp's job was made the more difficult because the British are on good terms with the Portuguese in Beira. More than in any other part of Portuguese East Africa the Portuguese have benefited by British business interests. For instance, the British-built railroad opened up between Beira and Zambesi River in 1922 not only made Beira the port of Nyasaland, thereby increasing the port's importance; it also inspired agricultural cultivation and mineral prospecting along the entire length of the railroad.

Six months after the German mission had completed its work in Portuguese East Africa, war was declared. The Nazis abandoned plans for improving Lourenço Marques' harbour and concentrated on the immediate task of using Portuguese East Africa as a base for operations against the Union of South Africa and Allied shipping using its ports.

The war made Lourenço Marques a refuge for Nazis who had lived in the Union. Between Hitler's attack on Poland and Chamberlain's declaration of war on the Reich, hundreds of German citizens fled from Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban and Rhodesia. Most of them crossed the frontier safely. Only a few reached it too late. A well-known Italian racing motorist, who had lived a presumably innocent life for years in the Union, tuned up his powerful Maserati and sped down South African roads at ninety m.p.h. for the border. The South African police had long suspected that he was an Axis agent. They prevented his escape, catching him at the frontier by blocking the road with rocks and fallen trees.

There were at least 1,200 Germans in Lourenço Marques in 1942. Some of them were espionage agents, others were merely German nationals who felt that life would be more tolerable in Portuguese East Africa. But this latter group has had its collective mind changed. Emile Hanke has taken it in hand. And today they are members of the *Ortsgruppe Suedafrika*—South African District Group—the Fuehrer of which is Justus Leidenberg, a fanatical Nazi whom Hanke took a liking to when he arrived in Lourenço Marques.

When the Union of South Africa declared war on Germany there were a number of German ships tied up at Lourenço Marques.

Emile Hanke gave orders for three of them to run the blockade to South America, where they would be loaded with Argentine wheat before they started on the last dangerous journey to Germany. All three vessels were intercepted by the British Fleet, based at the South African port of Simonstown, and were escorted to Allied ports.

There were still at least four German ships in Lourenço Marques in 1942. The crews were organized into *Bordzellen*—shipboard cells. Every week meetings were arranged between the *Ortsgruppe* and the *Bordzellen*. Justus Leidenberg gave them the latest DNB news from Germany, and on occasions the Portuguese authorities permitted them to use the Lourenço Marques radio station for propaganda broadcasts to Germany and the Union. But these activities, like those of the sun-bathing young Germans on the Polana beach, were only the relatively innocent ones of the German movement on Portuguese soil.

Behind the *Ortsgruppe* and the *Bordzellen* Emile Hanke was attending to more important things. The German ship *Dortmunder*, which dropped anchor in Lourenço Marques harbour before September, 1939, brought from the Reich a short-wave radio transmitter capable of sending messages to Berlin. This transmitter has been installed in the hinterland of Portuguese East Africa, only a few miles from Lourenço Marques. The Portuguese authorities were aware of its existence, but not of its location. The British in Lourenço Marques have tried to hunt it down ever since the war broke out, and at least two British Intelligence agents have been reported missing in the attempt.

The British were put on to the scent by a list of detailed instructions which fell into their hands from the German Admiralty, reporting on how to send Allied shipping movements to Berlin. The information, according to the German Admiralty's memorandum, was to be transmitted via the secret short-wave radio.

Emile Hanke's agents in Lourenço Marques and in the Union ports of Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Simonstown keep the secret

radio transmitter informed of facts which can help Germany combat the Allies on the high seas. Each agent manages to cross the frontier to Portuguese East Africa unobserved at least once every two weeks, bringing vital information to Emile Hanke. The German Admiralty is primarily interested in the shipments of raw materials from South Africa to Britain and the United States: dates of sailings, ports of destinations and information concerning the routes used, whether United Nations ships are convoyed, and whether they pass through the Mozambique Channel or west of Madagascar.

Axis agents in Cape Town inform Lourenço Marques of Allied convoys steaming round the Cape of Good Hope. The short-wave transmitter sends the details to the German Admiralty in Berlin. And by the time the convoy reaches waters off the coast of Zanzibar it may be attacked by U-boats.

The Nazis also use the facilities of the local commercial cable companies for transmitting messages of minor importance to Berlin.

The Union authorities are acutely conscious of spy traffic between South Africa and Lourenço Marques. During 1941 four people were interned in the Union after a visit to Portuguese territory. And in one case the Union police possessed proof of contact with an enemy agent in Lourenço Marques and of a "highly dangerous" communication with the German Government. Yet there have been seemingly curious inconsistencies in the Union Government's policy of controlling passenger traffic from the Union to foreign countries. In June, 1941, a party of 100 Transvaal school-teachers was given permission to visit Lourenço Marques. What was particularly suspicious about the tourists was that many of them were former members of Ossewa Brandwag, subversive pro-Fascist Afrikaaner group.

## XX

### THE NEUTRAL PORTUGUESE

PORTUGAL HAS SEEN EUROPE'S INDEPENDENCIES TOPPLE LIKE SO MANY ninepins. She has seen, not without anxiety, the disintegration of empires larger than her own and their transfer to Axis countries. Her wartime policy is very simply to avoid the status of a belligerent and to keep secure the independence of Portugal in Europe and, only so far as possible, in her colonies. The exclusive credit for steering Portugal successfully between the warring Powers goes to Dr. Oliveira Salazar, Portugal's strong man since the overthrow of the liberal republic in 1926. His dual task is to preserve the spirit, if not always the structure, of the Anglo-Portuguese alliance and to maintain friendly relations with Germany and Italy. Salazar doesn't find it easy; his love for the Axis is tempered by the course of the war. Behind all his pious declarations of neutrality there are many contradictions and inconsistencies, and he intends above all for Portugal to emerge at the close of the war with a record of having substantially contributed to the cause of the winning side.

A few days before the outbreak of war in 1939 the leading and semi-official Lisbon newspaper *Diario de Manhã* attacked the totalitarian

principles of "racial supremacy" and "living-space". And while Hitler's armies were smashing across the Polish border Dr. Salazar publicly indicated his sympathy for the Allies. There were some naïve sighs of relief in Whitehall. But the war had barely begun and the chances of Allied victory looked excellent. France's "impregnable" Maginot Line was nicely situated between Portugal and Germany. Italy, moreover, was still at peace, and there was no sign that Mussolini intended to throw his country into the war immediately. After all, the Chamberlain Government was busy shipping thousands of tons of oil to Italy. That was assurance enough that Italy would stay out. Portugal's relations with Italy had been very good. Common Latin origins, religious bonds and similarities between governing systems had been emphasized for years—and particularly during the Spanish Civil War.

But after those first hectic days of war Dr. Salazar's enthusiasm for the Allies declined appreciably. The collapse of France and the cracking of the Maginot Line, bringing the Germans to the very borders of the Iberian Peninsula, acted like an ice-cold shower on Portugal and Dr. Salazar. And a year later, when Soviet Russia joined the Powers fighting the Axis, Dr. Salazar decided that there was a limit to political rationalization. Since his rise to power he had hardly made a speech that did not emphasize the evils of Communism. The Communists had always been blamed when bombs were hurled at Dr. Salazar. He had openly supported General Franco during the Spanish Civil War because he believed the Loyalists were Reds and that a Loyalist victory would threaten not only the stability of his regime but perhaps the very independence of Portugal itself.

Dr. Salazar therefore found it quite impossible to support the new alliance between the British and the Russians. Such political expediency would have backfired and shaken the foundations of his regime. The Portuguese people, hundreds of thousands of whom saw in the Anglo-Soviet alliance a welcome sign of eventual Allied victory, would have been elated at official praise of the Allied cause. It would have raised hopes that the Salazar Government had at last realized the futility of flirting with Hitler. But Salazar made no speech—and his silence was certainly not golden.

Up to the American invasion of French North Africa, Dr. Salazar forcibly discouraged any open expression of support for the United Nations. His secret police, operating as stealthily and barbarously as the Gestapo, have thrown into goal more than 5000 people who have spoken up in favour of the Allies. Lisbon's movie audiences feared to applaud the appearance on the screen of Winston Churchill or Franklin D. Roosevelt. People who did left the building handcuffed to a plain-clothes man. Dawn raids on private homes have routed out persons suspected of liberal leanings.

Portugal's controlled Press gave equal space to news from the United Nations and Axis propaganda mills. Editorials constantly warned against supporting either group of belligerents. But while Portugal militantly deflated pro-Allied enthusiasm, there have been few signs of a similar policy towards those elements who support the Axis. High members of the Army and police, as well as many representatives of Portugal's upper class, are sufficiently appalled by the spectre of Communism to ally themselves with Fascism. Since the war there has been no decline in the

vigorous pro-Fascist activities of the Legiao Portuguesa (Portuguese Legion) and the Mocidade Portuguesa (Portuguese Youth Movement), both of which are highly disciplined military-minded organizations trained in Germany and well soaked in the principles of the Corporative State and National Socialism.

In questions of foreign trade Portugal's policy of neutrality has proved even more cynical. After the collapse of France and the arrival of German troops at the Spanish frontier, German-Portuguese trade was resumed. Despite poor railroad facilities through Spain, Portugal managed to export to the Reich an appreciable quantity of tin, tungsten and sardines as well as some agricultural products.

Such a trade policy could only serve to weaken further the ancient bonds of the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance. And during 1941 Britain and the United States made a concerted effort to persuade Portugal to give up its trade with the Axis Powers. But while Portugal was willing to develop trade relations with the Allies, there was a resolute determination to keep the Axis as a customer, too. Not only was this policy good business, since some of Portugal's products were much sought after by the belligerents, but the factual record up to 1942 showed that Portugal's foreign trade policy had favoured nobody in particular and everybody in general.

Not until victory for one side or the other appears a certainty can Portugal afford to abandon trade relations with the losing side. At present Portugal shares its tremendous cork output among the United States (which imports from Portugal more than two-thirds of its total needs), Britain and Germany. The belligerent Powers bid with bitter rivalry for Portugal's production of tungsten, which has shown phenomenal growth in recent years.

But the most interesting competition for Portuguese products concerned Portugal's sardine-canning industry. Shortages in tinsplate due to the British blockade threatened to cripple the canning industry and to destroy the 1941 sardine catch. Germany, Britain and the United States each rushed forward with offers of tinsplate, promising to purchase the sardines as soon as they were canned. Portugal, not wishing to offend any of them, accepted all offers. The canning industry prospered, the customers received the sardines and—who knows? perhaps packed in one another's tinsplate.

The Portuguese Government is acutely aware that, because of Portugal's geographical position, its destiny may very well lie in the hands of the Nazis. Whatever Portugal's policy towards the Axis may be—friendly or otherwise—the Germans might at any time find it strategically expedient to occupy the country. Portugal's protection from German aggression could only be assured by the presence of United Nations' troops on Portuguese soil. Such a situation would be almost as odious to Dr. Salazar as German troops in Portugal. The Portuguese Government therefore prefers to concentrate on maintaining good relations with Berlin in the vague hope that the Nazis will thus be appeased and will leave Portugal alone.

Undoubtedly, Dr. Salazar would lean towards the Allies in the event of a British-American invasion of Southern Europe from bases in North Africa.

The situation is vastly different in the Portuguese colonies. When the Japanese occupied Portuguese Timor there was no sign of acquiescence in Lisbon. Dr. Salazar protested—guardedly perhaps—and for the first time in years the Portuguese people were united in thought and word. But their indignation was directed exclusively at Tokyo; it was not allowed to include Japan's partners in Europe.

The truth is that Portugal must necessarily leave the destiny of her colonies in Allied hands. There are no powerful military forces in Portugal's overseas possessions. None of them could hold off an attack from a major Power for more than a few hours. But for the purposes of preserving national prestige, and in order not to offend Germany, the Lisbon Government has never asked the Allies for assurances of assistance in case of aggression. However, 20,000 South African troops stand ready to march into Portuguese East Africa if that colony should be invaded by the Axis.

The Portuguese in Africa are freer than their brothers in Portugal. It is true that constitutionally they are as repressed. But they talk more freely. Dr. Salazar's secret police do not work in the colonies. The Portuguese in Lourenço Marques greatly prefer the British to the Nazis, despite their jealousy of British Africa's prosperity. The pro-Allied feeling became even more intense after the British occupation of Madagascar, for there had been an awareness that the huge French island in Japanese hands would have become a springboard for an attack on Portuguese East Africa.

While they still have no intention of inviting United Nations troops to use Portuguese bases, the Portuguese Colonials might easily change their minds if a Japanese fleet challenged the British occupation of Madagascar. No protest from Lisbon would be likely to make them hesitate. The colonial administration would be overthrown if a Nazi-inspired order from Lisbon demanded that they give up their homes to the Japanese.

But so long as the British remain securely in charge of Madagascar, the Portuguese East Africans are satisfied to keep out of the war. Many of them are disgusted because Lisbon still permits Lourenço Marques to be the headquarters of the Nazis in Southern Africa. They are inclined to believe that Emile Hanke and his Nazi agents might give the South Africans a legitimate excuse for occupying Lourenço Marques. And additionally, they are disturbed by Nazi stories describing in minute detail Hitler's plans for the exploitation of Portuguese East Africa after the war.

The Portuguese are rightfully fearful of German plans for Africa. The history of their struggles with the Germans during the scramble for Africa in the nineteenth century is still fresh in their minds. Portuguese schoolboys' history books are full of what are described as "injustices" to the Portuguese Empire. The case of the Kionga territory on Portuguese East Africa's northern boundaries is the one which the Portuguese in Africa are most indignant about. In 1890 Germany took possession by treaty with Britain of territories ruled by the Sultan of Zanzibar. The Germans claimed that Kionga was included in the bargain, but Portugal refused to recognize the German claim. After four years of long diplomatic wranglings, Germany sent a force into the Kionga area

and hoisted the German flag. It was not until 1919 under the Versailles Treaty that Kionga was returned to Portugal by the Allies.

Today the Portuguese sense the threat of German occupation of not only disputed Kionga, but of all Portuguese East Africa. They realize fully that their independence, their very lives, depend upon the military and naval power of the British Empire. But not until they see the enemy at the gates are they likely to give up their neutrality and make their contribution to preserve their own independence, though it is true they have given us the use of the Azores as an air base.

## XXI

### MADAGASCAR—BACK DOOR TO AFRICA

THE MILITARY HISTORY OF 1942 RECORDS ONE BRITISH VICTORY OVER THE Japanese warlords. British forces beat the Japanese to the occupation of Madagascar, fourth largest island in the world and located off the East Coast of Africa. The first phase of the occupation ended with the capture of Diego Suarez, a naval base at the northern tip of the island. The job was only half finished. There was still the grave possibility that the Japanese would land in the Vichy-controlled areas. But for four months the British stopped military operations, bringing into play the old diplomatic game of appeasement. In September the British decided that appeasement didn't work even with the French Fascists, and promptly carried out a campaign to complete occupation of the island.

But Japan was still hovering on the sidelines. There was still the chance that they might challenge the British occupation some time in the future. They had cast covetous eyes on Madagascar as far back as 1927.

In that year Tokyo sent out a mission of economists, agricultural experts, tropical-disease specialists, agronomists and meteorologists, ostensibly to explore the possibilities of a mass migration of Japanese farmers and peasants. It was not until some time later that the French authorities on the island found out that the economists happened also to be high-ranking Japanese naval officers and that the agronomists were members of the Japanese War Department as well. In 1926 the Polish Government had been informed by a mission of official Polish investigators that Madagascar was unsuitable for colonization on a big scale. The Japanese mission spent weeks there before it concluded that even the lowly Japanese peasant could hardly be expected to survive a hard-working, pioneering life on this steaming, fever-ridden piece of land. The mission bowed its way out, informing the French of their decision. Significantly, the Japanese never published a report on their findings. But a year later a document fell into the hands of the French Intelligence Service, indicating that Japan's mission had assembled quite a collection of facts concerning Madagascar's usefulness as a strategic stronghold from which an attack might be made on Southern Africa.

The South Africans had every reason to fear the "Yellow Peril". The spectre of Japanese hordes swarming over the Union of South Africa, raping their women, carrying off their children and murdering their men,



has always disturbed their slumber. Consequently, South Africa has always taken a very personal interest in Far Eastern affairs. While Cape Town political circles invariably referred to General Franco as a "good Christian gentleman" and the Spanish Loyalists as "Red Rabbie", the Chinese, fighting the Asiatic end of the Axis, were heroes battling Fascism. When it came to supporting the Chinese, the South Africans magnificently rose above their colour prejudice, and the fact that the Chinese were members of the yellow race was gloriously unmentionable. Collections for Chinese medical aid netted considerably more than those for starving Spanish children. Leftist groups gained the support of many of South Africa's wealthiest business men when they campaigned for a boycott of Japanese goods. When the Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1937 a South African newspaper syndicate maintained a special correspondent in China. Coverage in Germany, Italy and Spain was left to the regular Press services.

Curiously enough, Madagascar before the war was never seriously mentioned as a base for Nipponese infiltration into Africa. The island belonged to France. And there was absolutely no reason to suppose that in time of war it would lie in the hands of a Fascist French Government pledged to an Axis victory. Madagascar, indeed, was a little-known part of the world even to the South Africans, despite its close proximity to the mainland. Few South Africans, as far as I could gather, had ever visited Madagascar. It was no place for a vacation because of its tropical climate and its malaria-soused inhabitants.

"You got business there?" inquired the skipper of the battered British tramp which was taking a cargo of assorted manufactured goods to the island. I had boarded the vessel at Lourenço Marques. I was the only passenger and was considered somewhat of an oddity by the crew. That anyone should *want* to go to Madagascar if he didn't stand to lose money by staying away was incomprehensible to these seamen. "No, no business," I replied, "just idle curiosity."

The captain and the first officer looked at me incredulously. "But there's nothing to *see*," they chorused, "and you'll *stew*, that's what you'll do!"

I stewed all right, but there was plenty to see—and to hear.

Tamatave, Madagascar's principal port, was certainly no inspiration for the picture-postcard industry. It sizzled in a temperature of 106 degrees. It reeked of cattle hides and livestock awaiting export. The town is built on a sandy peninsula, and except when the wind blows the sand burns your feet. It is always finding its way into the food. From November to April, the rainy season, the place is frequently hit by terrific storms which blow away anything and anybody that are not securely battened down. Minor tidal waves usually follow the storms, crashing over the coral reefs that form the harbour and sometimes overturning the smaller craft riding at anchor.

Nobody lives in Tamatave because they like the place. But 46 per cent of Madagascar's trade flows through its port, so that most of the foreign consuls and trade attachés are established there. Their unpretentious residences are scarcely a stone's-throw from the smelly meat-preserving factories and the grimy warehouses. The population consists of these foreigners, a number of French port officials and civi-

servants, Chinese, Hindus and local natives. All the stores—and some of them are quite good, too, running a wide range of merchandise—are owned and operated by the Chinese and Hindus. They are loathed by the natives, whom they overcharge. These stores are also patronized by the crews of foreign vessels, the Consulates and the French officials. A Hindu with a patent cure for syphilis did a thriving business with natives, and after dark quite a few Frenchmen would sneak into his store as well.

Madagascar's capital city is Antananarivo, 4,000 feet above sea level in the central highlands and 135 miles from Tamatave. Its climate is sub-tropical; its average temperature is more bearable than the sticky lowlands and coastal regions. The French have made only a half-hearted attempt to make Madagascar a livable place for the white man, and Antananarivo reveals that half-heartedness more than any other place on the island. The first thing you see is the timber structure of the royal palace of the one-time native chiefs, an intricately designed, oriental-looking building which stands 120 feet high. The Hova race, believed to be of Malayan origin, had an impressive cultural background before the French walked in to wipe out its rule. The last Hova ruler to inhabit this wooden palace was Queen Ravavalona III, who was driven into exile by the French just before the turn of the century.

There are other smaller royal dwellings dotted through the city. The Malagasy, a collective noun for the twenty-odd native tribes, live in little straw and wood huts, or in one-roomed brick houses, so small that they resemble chicken-coops. Alongside these ancient or merely insanitary habitations the French have built clean, glittering houses and public buildings of modern brick and stone. The residency of the Governor-General stands out in all its serenity. The Catholic and Protestant churches give the city a real touch of Western civilization. Tree-lined streets have been laid out, and wide flights of steps, hewn out of white stone, climb up the steeper hillsides.

But the general appearance of Antananarivo gives the impression that the French quickly tired of modernizing the place. It is "civilized" only in spots. The reason for this is that all but a handful of Madagascar's 26,000 French population are not permanent residents. They are either civil servants, plantation managers, agents and officials of French trading companies—and their one ambition in life is to get back to France as soon as their stretch is over. The only white people who have resigned themselves to the fact that their graves will be in Madagascar are the missionaries, the very few plantation *owners* and the small number of hard-bitten, grouchy French merchants who have either been disappointed in love or are too old to face the keen competition of their younger rivals back home.

The most unpopular man on the island in 1938 and 1939 was Léon Cayla, the French Governor-General. He was a Catholic, an associate of Marshal Pétain, a rabid anti-Semite and a Frenchman who constantly criticized what he called "the weak democratic principles of my Government". The majority of Frenchmen were Protestants, who resented a Catholic as their representative. Cayla was so dictatorial in his administration, so disinterested in the appalling discomfort of native life, that the Catholic missionaries, almost to a man, refused to have anything to do with him. But Cayla was more than these things. Long before he came

out in favour of the Vichy regime he was working for the downfall of democracy in France. He tried to start a local unit of the Cagoulaards, France's Fascist league of hooded men. His statements against the Popular Front Government went far beyond the realms of mere democratic criticism. He refused point blank to carry out certain mild reforms in the treatment of the Malagasy which had been ordered by the French Colonial Office in Paris. He threatened his officials with instant dismissal if they attempted to spread the ideology of the Popular Front—the ideology of his own Government.

Even though many of the Frenchmen in Madagascar were themselves somewhat opposed to the Popular Front, their patriotism was such that they resented Cayla's attitude towards it. Some of them hated Cayla so intensely that they re-examined their position and decided that they were, after all, for the Popular Front. "What Cayla is for, we are against—and *vice versa*" was their comment. Most of the civil servants were discreet, not openly anti-Cayla, but willing to drop a few harsh words about him to their wives. They were constantly in fear of Cayla's private secret service, consisting of well-placed, pro-Fascist stooges who periodically reported to their boss on the political thinking of their colleagues. Civil servants dismissed for "insubordination" were never able to get a hearing in Paris. There were too many of Cayla's type in the Paris Government.

In 1938 the animosity for Cayla was at its height. He was entertaining a Japanese naval mission whose presence he did not report to Paris until after it was well on its way back to Japan. The mission had turned up unexpectedly in January without any fanfare or invitation, and Cayla had rushed down to Tamatave to welcome it. Not only did he give the Japanese permission to land, but he escorted them at the expense of the French Government to the island's northern regions, where he showed them over the Diego Suarez naval base. These facts were told me by a group of embittered young civil servants in Antananarivo. They proved the existence of the mission by introducing me to three Japanese naval officers. In full-dress uniform, the Japanese lounged about Antananarivo's boulevard cafés. They were the guests of Cayla and were staying at the French Residency. They had just returned from Diego Suarez, and seemed highly pleased with their trip. They nodded their heads and smiled expansively at everyone, including the natives, who thought they were Chinese and the vanguard of a Chinese invasion. The natives hated the Chinese employers and merchants on Madagascar.

The three Japanese officers spoke French fluently. "We are here on a courtesy visit," one of them told us. "We have enjoyed ourselves greatly." The French civil servants didn't trouble to disguise their suspicions. "Diego Suarez," one said loudly, "is very strong. It's a pity our fleet wasn't in when you were there. That would have impressed you even more, I'm sure."

The Japanese smiled, but they didn't say a word.

The mission left a few days later. Cayla saw them off at Tamatave. When he got back to the capital he found an anonymous note lying on his desk at the Residency. "If the Japanese ever return as enemies," it said, "you, Léon Cayla, will not welcome them. You will be rotting under six feet of Madagascar's soil."

Cayla swore he would find the sender of the note. But none of his stooges apparently could trace its composer. It was the joke of the capital for weeks. But the Japanese visit was really a serious business. The story had got around that Cayla had talked at length about the island's defence system. According to one French official, the Japanese officers had been free to make detailed sketches of everything they saw, and the inevitable cameras clicked constantly during their stay. The Japanese were said to have been quite unimpressed with Diego Suarez. In friendly tones they were reported to have outlined to Cayla a plan for the improvement of the naval base, the construction of airfields and the extension of highways and railroads throughout the island. A French merchant returning to France was said to have informed the Colonial Office of Cayla's alleged loose tongue. But Cayla was not recalled until April, 1939. And meanwhile the Berlin-Tokyo Axis was trying hard to build up a fifth column on Madagascar. Nazi "tourists" from Lourenço Marques across the Mozambique Channel had arrived to sum up the situation. There was a certainty that quite a number of French civil servants had been bribed and were willing to furnish the Axis with vital information concerning the disposition of French naval forces at Diego Suarez. Among the Hova tribe they had apparently found some thousands of natives who would start an uprising against the French at any given moment. The Hovas were proud people; they had subdued the other tribes of the island and were ruling with some measure of success long before the French appeared. From the early nineteenth century until 1895 the Hovas had repelled all French attempts to take over. They still hate the French bitterly. In 1916 the French authorities discovered an extraordinarily well-planned Hova poison plot which was designed to kill off the white men on Madagascar. Many Hovas were therefore ready to listen to almost anybody who would promise to rid them of the French.

It was up to the Nazis to approach the Hovas because the Japanese had had no success with them. When the first Japanese agents arrived to talk the Hovas into rebellion against the French they used a familiar propaganda technique. They emphasized that the Hovas came from old Malayan stock, that they were Asiatics like the Japanese, and that these facts were an excellent basis on which to form a brotherly alliance designed to serve their mutual interests. This was the line they were to use in Burma with a large measure of success some years later. In Madagascar it failed. The Hovas, with their limited knowledge of world affairs, confused the Japanese with the Chinese. And the 15,000 Chinese merchants and traders on Madagascar had exploited and swindled the Hovas for years. The Hovas therefore took an immediate dislike to the Japanese. Moreover, they had learned to hate all Asiatics. The 15,000 Hindu traders on the island treated them with the same ruthlessness as the Chinese did. In vain the Japanese tried to explain that they were enemies of the Chinese, that the Madagascar merchants would be deported once the Japanese moved in. They pointed to the fact that the Chinese had boycotted Japanese goods. They said that Japanese goods were cheap and that the Chinese kept the standard of living high by importing the manufactures of other countries which were unable to produce at the same low cost. The Hovas, however, held firmly to the position that they

would even prefer to keep the French in control of Madagascar rather than let it fall into the hands of yet another Asiatic people.

When the Nazi "tourists" arrived they carefully avoided mention of the Berlin-Tokyo Axis. They agreed heartily that Hindus and Chinese were people to be liquidated, but laid the greatest emphasis on the desirability of revolting against the French. In 1938 some of the French civil servants were seriously disturbed by the headway the Nazis had been making with the Hovas.

"The Hovas are splendid guerillas," one of them said to me. "They could start a hell of a mess without firearms. There are enough of them in Antananarivo to take the city with their bare hands. And you can't reason with a Hova—not if you're a Frenchman. They hate us; they wouldn't give us a chance once they got started. The last time we put down a local revolt they held out for three weeks in the highlands. At night they would come down and attack our garrison with spears dipped in one of their damned poisons. Even if you saw them first, they always managed to hurl the spears *after* you had shot them. One bullet's no good for a Hova, you need a quick-firing machine-gun for every damned one of them!"

The Nazis didn't even attempt to organize the tribe which inhabits the northern regions of Madagascar. *These natives are of Semitic origin.* While they have since intermarried with the Bantus, who live in the western part of the island, they stem from a Jewish tribe which emigrated to Madagascar many hundreds of years ago, probably from North Africa. This tribe still observes the rite of circumcision, performed somewhat crudely with native weapons. Hitler's notoriety had spread even to this remote corner of the globe. His persecution of the Jews was well known to these people. Anti-Fascist French civil servants had carefully spread the news from Germany among them, emphasizing some of the worst atrocity stories. The natives were properly shocked. And so it was that they were among the first to donate sums of money to the relief of German Jewish refugees. This was a story I would spitefully relate to some of my South African Jewish friends who harbour the same racial prejudices against their Bantu "houseboys" as Hitler does against the Jews in Germany.

Since this tribe lived in the area of Diego Suarez, the naval base and the point of greatest interest to a prospective invader, the Nazis felt particularly frustrated. Their only hope was that the Hova native troops stationed to guard the naval base would revolt against their French officers at the appropriate moment. But this was a somewhat forlorn hope, because the Hova *soldiers* were loyal to France, and were isolated in barracks, only coming in contact with civilian members of their tribe for brief intervals. This was primarily because the French might need the Hova troops to put down a revolt of their own tribe. While this was a risky business, the French believed that the Hovas made the best soldiers, and that it would be even more risky to attempt to smash a Hova revolt with soldiers of another tribe. That, they said, would be suicidal. Hovas would much prefer to be subdued by Hovas. They would be terribly humiliated if the French set another tribe on them. They just wouldn't stand for it, because to the Hovas all the other Malagasy were weak and inferior peoples.

The primary reason for Axis interest in Madagascar was its strategic importance from a military viewpoint. While the island holds possibilities as a producer of raw materials, economic and industrial development could only be accomplished by long-range planning because of bad communications and disease. Moreover, Berlin and Tokyo appear to be at odds over the question of Madagascar's role in a post-war New Order. Hitler, as we shall see, has a brutal plan to turn the island into a vast dumping-ground for Europe's Jews. Japan, on the other hand, imagines Madagascar as a Japanese colony, free from Occidental influence and a source of vital minerals.

The Nipponese and the Nazis, however, see eye to eye on Madagascar's immediate position in Axis strategy. Both of them are anxious to keep shipments of Allied war materials from getting to Russia, India and the Middle East. If the Japanese will concentrate on this job, Hitler is quite willing to pay the price of seeing them overrun part of Eastern Africa. The Japanese General Staff is believed to be split on the idea of invading Africa, but a strong group headed by General Tomoyuki Yamashita, whose troops conquered Singapore, is anxious to carry Japan's conquests there. Since the British occupation of Madagascar, Hitler has had to make the Japanese even more tempting offers in order to drive them to an attempted invasion. The Japanese, much to Hitler's annoyance, before the war tried to monopolize the trade of Tanganyika, formerly German East Africa. Well-informed sources in London reported in March, 1942, that Hitler had even offered Tanganyika to the Japanese if they would move to cut Allied shipping routes up Africa's East Coast.

On Madagascar the Japanese would find the best naval base in the Indian Ocean. At Diego Suarez there are fortifications mounting six-inch guns, a dry dock capable of handling heavy cruisers, fully equipped naval repair shops, a well-protected ammunition dump and ample fuel storage facilities. At its shallowest the harbour is forty feet deep. There are more than 100 landing-grounds for aircraft dotted throughout the island. Long-range German transports and bombers based in Italy are within flying range of Madagascar.

Madagascar is only 250 miles off the coast of Portuguese East Africa, whose anti-invasion defences are practically non-existent. The Portuguese, with their policy of desperate neutrality, would allow no Allied troops on their soil until the Japanese had actually launched their attack. But most important of all, Japanese bombers operating from Madagascar could blast the vital ports of the Union of South Africa as well as the great air ferry route across Africa's waistline which supplies the Middle East. South Africa's main ports—Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and Durban—are essential points in the long chain of Allied communications between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Cape Town smashed by a surprise Japanese bombing attack or merely rendered untenable to shipping by Japanese air power would be a grievous blow. It might spell the difference between Allied victory and defeat in Russia and India. Ships laden with war materials for these battle areas would be delayed and constantly endangered by enemy aircraft. At present Cape Town is able to handle as many as thirty-two vessels simultaneously. When South Africa entered the war Cape Town boasted two anti-aircraft guns for protection against enemy aircraft. While the situation was inexcusable, the danger

of air attack was at that time somewhat remote. But even in the early part of 1942, when the South Africans started to worry about Vichy-controlled Madagascar, coastal defences were still pitifully inadequate and incapable of effectively resisting an air offensive. The South African Press frequently drew attention to this weakness. When the British occupied Madagascar, wishful thinkers believed that the last threat of attack by Axis planes had been wiped out. Fortunately, South African defence authorities did not view the occupation as a complete solution to their problems; they welcomed it merely as a release from some of their *worst* nightmares. The arrival of heavy defence weapons from the U.S.A. and Britain has since helped to improve matters.

How the Vichy French conspired with the Nazis and the Japanese over Madagascar's status makes quite a story. Léon Cayla was replaced in April, 1939, by Governor Jules de Coppet, a loyal pro-Allied Frenchman. But unfortunately Cayla's influence remained. Many of De Coppet's high officials discouraged patriotic Frenchmen who wanted to return to fight for their country. Meanwhile, Cayla himself kept in close touch with Madagascar. From Paris, where he had sunk into retirement, he kept his former subordinates on the island informed of France's war progress. He is said to have written to several of Madagascar's army officers and higher civil servants that France had been dragged into the war by Britain; that Germany and France were really the best of friends and that Premier Edouard Daladier and his Ministers were traitors. Cayla is reported to have been elated some months after the outbreak of war when he read a dispatch in a French newspaper concerning his hero, Marshal Pétain. The white-haired old Marshal was at that time France's Ambassador to Spain. The dispatch told how he had inadvertently come face to face with the German Ambassador one Sunday morning outside the cathedral at Burgos. Diplomats standing near by turned away in embarrassment, conversation degenerated into hushed whispers as everyone waited to see what would happen. Marshal Pétain thrust out his hand, smiling broadly. The German Ambassador grasped it, shook it, and the two of them spent the next few minutes in friendly conversation.

Cayla was said to have described this incident in a letter to one of his former administrators in Madagascar, pointing to it as proof that the war was an act from the beginning, purely a face-saver for France and Britain. He explained that France was forced to honour her obligations to Poland by a declaration of war against Germany, but that after a short period a peace would be negotiated with the Germans.

History does not record Cayla's sentiments when the Germans broke through at Sedan, surrounded the Maginot Line, and forced France to her knees. But he was worried about Madagascar. He knew that De Coppet would bring the island over to the Free French. He wanted to go back to preserve it for Vichy. He conferred with Marshal Pétain, and within ten days he was on his way as a "special envoy" to Madagascar. When he arrived he made a rapid investigation of his former colleagues, found that most of the higher-paid of them were pro-Vichy and willing to maintain relations with the Vichy Government. De Coppet was thrown into gaol as a political prisoner and later deported to Unoccupied France. Cayla then formally announced Madagascar's allegiance to Vichy.

On orders from Pétain, Cayla flagrantly violated Madagascar's supposed neutrality. The British had agreed that a specified number of food ships would be permitted to ply between Madagascar and Unoccupied France. French freighters loaded with food left Tamatave for Italian-held French Somaliland on the East Coast of Africa. In addition, Cayla loaded vessels with vital war materials which were obviously destined for Germany. British Intelligence agents on Madagascar were fortunately supplied with this information by anti-Vichy civil servants. The news was sent from the island by secret radio, and the cargoes were seized by British warships before the vessels had rounded the Cape of Good Hope.

In September, 1940, the British delivered an ultimatum to Governor Cayla, demanding that he repudiate the Vichy regime and join General Charles de Gaulle's Fighting French forces on pain of suffering a starvation blockade of Madagascar.

Cayla ignored the ultimatum. The British Navy went to work, patrolling every mile of Madagascar's 2,000-mile coastline in the Mozambique Channel. But Cayla's ships still attempted to run the blockade. Most of them were caught by the British and escorted into South African ports. The Vichy Minister in the Union of South Africa protested when the British announced that many of the seized vessels were carrying rubber. He naïvely declared that the rubber was needed in Unoccupied France for bicycle and perambulator tyres. Several Greek ships in Madagascar ports were loaded with contraband materials, waiting to sail. Fifth columnists in the Union flashed a radio message to the French authorities, telling them that the coast of South Africa was clear. The Greek ships steamed out of Madagascar, giving the Cape of Good Hope a wide berth. But they, too, were caught in the British net.

In December, 1940, Marshal Pétain relieved Cayla of his post because of old age. He was replaced by Armand Annet, a fifty-three-year-old friend of Pétain who had ruled the French colony of Dahomey in West Africa and had steered it safely to Vichy's side after the Franco-German Armistice. Under Annet, Madagascar quickly became an armed camp. The peace-time garrison of approximately 5000 troops, mostly natives, was rapidly expanded. By the time the British attacked the defence forces numbered about 16,000. Annet had some trouble with French officers who were de Gaullist sympathizers, but he managed to replace them with Vichy men. The Malagasy troops were put through an intensive training programme. Not only did they receive instruction in the use of artillery, machine-guns, hand grenades, and rifles, but were also taught to fly military aircraft. In January, 1942, the Malagasy forces conducted large-scale manoeuvres. The Madagascar radio, beamed to Southern Africa, boasted that the troops were the best fighters in the French Empire, better even than the famous Senegalese soldiers. The defence works at Diego Suarez were strengthened, air-raid precautions were instituted in Antananarivo and Tamatave, and the big airfield at Tulear, on the south-west coast and less than 900 miles from the Union port of Durban, was enlarged to handle the heaviest type of long-range bombers.

Then Annet went to work among the white civil population. Firstly, the British Consul, R. J. H. Smith, in Antananarivo was made a virtual



prisoner. He was not permitted to leave the capital. All diplomatic facilities for communicating with his Government were taken away. The German and Japanese Consuls were allowed to roam at will throughout the length and breadth of the island. Hundreds of de Gaullist sympathizers were arrested and thrown into concentration camps. In April, 1942, Annet arrested his own secretary in a widespread purge of his administration. The higher ranks of the civil servants remained loyal to Vichy, primarily because they saw in a repudiation of the Pétain regime the loss of their pensions. Minor civil servants, however, were de Gaullists. They were gaoled. The leader of Madagascar's First World War veterans' organization, Jules François Clermont, was sentenced to five years' hard labour for spreading anti-Vichy propaganda. He was put aboard a ship with others who were being sent to serve their sentence in French West Africa, where they would work on the new Trans-Saharan railroad which the Vichy French and the Nazis were rushing to completion. Luckily, the vessel was intercepted by the British Navy and the de Gaullists were released.

M. Clermont told the British that he and the other de Gaullists were convinced that the Vichy authorities would hand the island over to the Japanese. Annet, he said, was taking defensive measures not to resist the Nipponese, but to defend the island against United Nations forces after the Japanese had taken over.

Another de Gaullist, a high-ranking French officer who had been relieved of his command by Annet, escaped from Madagascar a few weeks before the British moved in. He reported:

"The large majority of French soldiers of the island were in favour of General de Gaulle and the Allies. Because they had shown their pro-Allied feelings a large number of dignitaries were imprisoned at Ansirabe, a former military sanatorium now made into a concentration camp. A large number of natives were imprisoned for the same reason.

"To cut short their resistance, Vichy embarked on a policy of deporting to France the most important civilians and military men. It is thus that General Abadie, Commander-in-Chief of the military forces of the island until the French armistice, was recalled to Vichy for having come to the defence of officers accused of Free French sympathies. Minor civilian and army officials were sent to distant parts of the island where they could exert no influence. For example, at Tulear, location of the most important aerodrome, almost all the civilian personnel was thus changed about.

"Faith in the Allied cause persisted, thanks to the radio broadcasts from London and Brazzaville. The Franco-British Association remained a centre of resistance, even after it had been disbanded. At Antananarivo resistance was from the beginning very conspicuous. Store windows were covered with the Cross of Lorraine. The Vichy Governor received many threatening letters and had to treble his guard in front of the Residency.

"Subsequently the adult population showed more discretion in expressing its pro-Allied sentiments, but this was not so with the children, who exchanged portraits of Churchill and General de Gaulle. To carry the Cross of Lorraine was forbidden. To express their opinions the children, scrawled everywhere two poles (*deux gaules*) and four wheels (*quatre roues*)—de Gaulle and Catroux, the two best-known generals.

"There were frequent attempts to escape in order to join the Free French Forces. The penalties inflicted on those who were caught were severe. Once two men and two women escaped in a small boat. Before embarking, they crossed the entire island, asking the inhabitants to shelter them when night came. All who offered them hospitality, even those who were not informed of their plans, were imprisoned. Later on a young man who now serves in the Free French aviation escaped to South Africa in a stolen plane. At this time his knowledge of piloting was elementary. He reached Cape Town safe and sound and sent a telegram from there to the Governor of Madagascar to announce his arrival.

"The followers of General de Gaulle were often imprisoned under the pretext of black-market activities. Among these a sixty-five-year-old man and a young girl were condemned to six months' imprisonment for having sold a novelty at a few cents above the normal price. Some Frenchmen were arrested for having toasted the health of General de Gaulle. Some jewellers got into difficulties for having sold de Gaulle emblems. The director of a porcelain factory was imprisoned for having made models of the Cross of Lorraine."

The British occupied the Diego Suarez naval base a few weeks after Governor Annet had received a Japanese military mission which had arrived on one of the many Japanese merchant vessels calling for raw materials. There was every indication that Madagascar was being softened for the Japanese blow. In Vichy, Marshal Pétain described the reports as "fantastic", and went out of his way to promise Britain and the United States that the Japanese would get no facilities in Madagascar. But Pétain had used the identical language some months back just before the Japanese moved, uncontested, into French Indo-China.

As the first British warships opened fire on Diego Suarez, Marshal Pétain and Pierre Laval were conferring in Vichy with two Japanese envoys, Admiral Naokuni Nomura and Rear-Admiral Katsuo Abe. Together they had concocted a plan that was to give Madagascar to the Japanese and still permit Laval and Pétain to retain their "honour".

The plan was simple enough. It was agreed that a small sea-borne Japanese invading force would strike at Madagascar, that the French would put up a token resistance which would crack the moment the British or the South Africans decided to intervene. The Japanese would then rapidly establish themselves and defend the island with the help of the Vichy French forces. The surprise British attack on Diego Suarez knocked the bottom out of this plan. But there is no room for complacency. The Axis is quite capable of amending its plan to meet new conditions.

The Nazis discovered Madagascar in 1931. They did not interest themselves in it, as the Japanese did, with the idea of eventually seizing it as a base for operations against Africa. But theirs was an equally ignoble purpose. They wanted to use it as a prison for the Jews. A Nazi pamphlet published in 1931 said: "The entire Jewish people, sooner or later, must be confined to an island. This would afford the possibility of control and minimize the danger of infection." The pamphlet ominously carried an outline of the island of Madagascar on its cover.

In April, 1941, the Nazi news agency, *World Service*, reported from Berlin: "Reports persist here that a secret clause of the Franco-German

armistice requires the French Government to allow Europe's Jews to enter Madagascar. Informed quarters believe that the French newspaper *Le Temps* had Madagascar in mind when it predicted for the future a 'permanent' solution of the Jewish problem which would not entail persecution."

The Nazis, by issuing these reports, were trying apparently to show the world that they had a humane plan for the Jews, that the slaughter in Europe was just so much Allied propaganda. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency in a dispatch dated April 29, 1941, from Stockholm, clearing-house for Nazi propaganda, reported: "Jewish leaders from the Reich, Austria, Nazi-held Poland, and the Protectorate were summoned by the Nazi authorities to a conference in Berlin at which the plan to have all the Jews from Europe 'evacuated' to the French island of Madagascar was offered them."

In September, 1941, reports seeped through the Nazi censorship that the first 5000 Jews in Poland had been registered for export to Madagascar. Another report told of 400 Jews from Danzig who had been put aboard a boat and shipped to an unknown destination in Africa. Since they never turned up in Madagascar, it is probable that they disembarked at Dakar and were put to work on the Sahara railroad.

Climatic conditions in Madagascar are such that any mass migration of whites would be doomed. Only the central highlands of the island are fit for white habitation, and even there the incidence of tropical diseases is high. France has never recommended Madagascar for colonization. Few of the 26,000 Frenchmen remain longer than five or six years. An unwritten rule forbids them to do any physical labour, lest they quickly fall victim to all the diseases Madagascar has to offer.

In the lowlands and humid coastal regions the only white men to be found are missionaries, officials and a few plantation managers. Yellow fever is rampant. More than eighty-five per cent of the natives suffer from malaria. The incidence of syphilis is high, and there are also cases of leprosy and elephantiasis. The Hovas are gradually dying out from these diseases. Although the birth-rate among them is high, the Hova population has fallen fifteen per cent in twenty-five years. The spread of malaria is primarily due to the existence of swamps and ricefields, fine breeding-grounds for malaria-carrying mosquitoes. Since rice is the staple food of the natives, the fields could not be cleared up without depriving the population of its livelihood. Only two per cent of Madagascar's area is under cultivation. Marcel Oliver, a former Governor and probably the best authority on the island's economy, claims that the soil is unproductive because of the primitive agricultural methods of the natives, and that it would be impossible to remove the natives from the limited areas where the soil is fertile without the danger of an uprising. In an article which appeared in *L'Illustration* in February, 1938, Oliver declared:

"Despite the apparent clemency of the atmosphere, Europeans who engage in physical labour are apt to become exhausted even before the actual onset of sickness. In that state, however, they are easy victims of local plagues. Not only our farm owners, but also our officials, engineers, agronomists, doctors and administrators are only too often doomed in this way."

Only once in Madagascar's history as a French colony did whites attempt to settle with the idea of residing permanently. In 1895, the year of the final conquest of the Malagasy warriors, General Gallieni, the Governor of the island, gave concessions to a number of young Frenchmen. By the turn of the century more than half of them were dead. The survivors returned to France, victims of pernicious anaemia, malaria, syphilis and yellow fever.

Despite this vicious background, the Polish Government sent a mission to Madagascar in 1937, eleven years after its investigators in 1926 had pronounced the islands unsuitable for colonization. But the 1937 Polish Government seemed determined to force "surplus" Jews out of the country. The attitude of the mission was therefore purely political, and the Polish Government seemed merely anxious to prove that colonization at least on a small scale was possible. Although no report was published, the head of the mission, Major Mieczyslaw Lepecki, who was apparently chosen for his highly developed anti-Semitism, reported in a book published in 1938 that Madagascar could absorb between 40,000 and 60,000 Polish Jews. Other members of the mission, including two Jewish experts, disagreed with Major Lepecki. So did Governor Léon Cayla, who believed that only blacks could do the physical work necessary to develop the island. Major Lepecki's book was treated with suspicion in France. The Polish Government, fearing international criticism, in view of the by now well-known conditions on Madagascar, gave up the idea for the second time.

But Hitler has decided that Madagascar is exactly the kind of place to send the Jews. It would be an admirable method of assuring their complete destruction, even though it would perhaps take a few years. In any case, the Nazis could no longer be charged with the bestiality of the concentration-camp system. There is no reason to believe that, since Hitler's aim is to rid Europe of Jews, the Nazis would bother about their welfare on Madagascar. Undoubtedly, they would seek to "prove" that Madagascar was a land of plenty, that whites could produce an abundant economy unaided by native labour.

Interestingly enough, the Nazis do not believe that pure Aryan Germans, who they claim are infinitely superior both physically and mentally, are capable of labouring in tropical Africa. One of the leaders of a Nazi mission to the former East African colonies reported in 1934: "I should like to warn against imagining that East Africa . . . would be in a position to receive a large part of the German surplus population. . . . It has not yet been proved that the European is physically capable of performing continuous heavy manual work in the tropical highlands and of maintaining himself throughout the generations. . . . From the point of view of settlement, East Africa must no longer be thought of as a region of colonization. . . ."

And Madagascar is afflicted with more diseases and a worse climate than the former German colonies in Africa.

## XXII

## TANGANYIKA MANDATE

TANGANYIKA, IN A SENTENCE, IS THE CLASSIC EXAMPLE IN AFRICA OF A country ruled by a set of British ex-public schoolboys carefully chosen for their accent, breeding and table manners. They govern the Tanganyika mandate with shameless laxity but with enormous consideration for nearly everybody. The playing-fields of Eton are never far from their minds—which, in Africa, is something to be thankful for. These officials, many of them young men with cavalry moustaches who don the proverbial dinner-jacket in the sweltering heat, can be forgiven almost everything because they genuinely "play the game".

On top of all this, however, Tanganyika's officials are incurable snobs. They just won't tolerate an Englishman who cannot sport an old-school tie. They use the word "cad" without even blushing. But, paradoxically enough, they treated the 2650 German settlers with scrupulous fairness up to the outbreak of war. The terms of the mandate were fulfilled with absolute good faith by the British officials; there was no sign of discrimination against the Germans—who, incidentally, outnumbered the British settlers. They lived freely in this British mandate, while their countrymen back in the Fatherland sweated under Hitler. And many of them would privately admit it. But that didn't make them bad Nazis. The majority of them, as in South-west Africa, were all for the return of Tanganyika to Germany. They were good Nazis either because they believed in the Fuehrer or because the German-financed companies that exported their coffee and tea and their sisal maintained full-time political officials who kept a regular check on their activities and their opinions, and even kept an eye on the local Fuehrers.

The English settlers—plantation owners, most of them—hated the mandate system. They wanted Tanganyika as a British colony, not a mandate. And here in one of the darkest spots of Africa was a curious phenomenon. These English settlers were the old-school-tie brand with perfect Colonel Blimp mentalities *in all but their attitude towards Mr. Neville Chamberlain and the Nazis*. They cursed appeasement. They raged at "that umbrella man" when he signed the Munich Pact. And when the German colonial question was raised a few months later they were all set to oppose *with arms* any attempt by Chamberlain to hand Tanganyika back to Germany. Their Tanganyika League, composed of Englishmen and Indian traders and merchants, demanded in November, 1938, an irrevocable declaration that the territory would remain "forever under the British flag". A scheme to throw open Tanganyika to German Jewish refugees was welcomed by the non-German whites. Here was another curious situation. Many English settlers had already ably demonstrated their anti-Semitic bias by more or less ostracizing the few Jewish traders and the one or two Jewish planters. In ordinary circumstances they would have opposed any big emigration of Jews for land settlement. But here was a chance to outnumber the Nazis by enthusiastic anti-Nazis, a chance to prevent areas which might later be handed out to settlers from falling into the hands of German Nazis.

Additionally, the English in Tanganyika figured that if Britain agreed to send out German refugees, the case against handing back the mandate to Germany would be appreciably weakened.

But the German Jews were never sent *en masse*. Only a few trickled in—and mostly under their own power, not under any British settlement scheme.

The war ruined the chance of the Germans in Tanganyika to *putsch*. The administration at the port of Dar Es Salaam acted promptly. The Germans were rounded up and the most dangerous of them interned. The credit went not so much to the administration, however, as to the militancy of the Tanganyika League. For if the administration had not acted against the Nazis, the League would have taken the law into its own hands and gone to work above the heads of the ex-public schoolboys.

The Germans had had a good run for their money. They had tried to outsmart the British and had failed. Even without Hitler to make their claims an international issue these Germans would have pressed for the return of the territory to Germany. Tanganyika was *their* country. It was German East Africa; it belonged to the Germans; its history was German. The fact that British and Belgian troops occupied it during the First World War was glossed over, considered a stroke of bad luck that had nothing to do with the present situation.

Some of the German settlers were Prussian aristocrats and ex-*Wehrmacht* officers who had fought against the Allies in the East Africa campaign. A few of them were old-school colonials who had helped open up the country for Germany in the 1890s. They were fiercely proud of their history, and especially of Karl Peters, one of German East Africa's founders. In 1884 the German Colonial Society sent Karl Peters and two other explorers into the territory, which was then claimed by the Sultan of Zanzibar. Some years previously, the Sultan, whose island was under a strong British influence, tried to lease his mainland territories to a British merchant named William McKinnin. The British Government ordered McKinnin to do no business with the Sultan. No clear explanation of the British Government's opposition to the deal is recorded. It may have been that Britain had her hands full elsewhere in Africa. But in any case, Germany decided that the Sultan's territories offered easy pickings.

The Karl Peters expedition was carried out secretly. The obvious design was to present both Britain and Zanzibar with a *fait accompli*. A treaty was signed with a native chief in February, 1884, in the inland district Usambara. The following year Germany made formal claim to the vast area on behalf of the German Colonial Society. The British Government in 1866 acknowledged the claim, forcing the furious Sultan of Zanzibar to drop his protests. The German East Africa Company was formed and in 1888 annexed the coastal regions, pushing the Arab rulers off the land. The Arabs revolted, and it was not until eleven years later that the Germans were able to stamp out their influence.

From the very beginning the Germans had trouble with the natives. Karl Peters, who had become the colony's administrator, was deposed because of the ruthless methods he used against the "non-co-operative" tribes. When the Germans pressed into the interior they came up against the warlike Wangoni tribe. More than 120,000 Wangonis were

slaughtered in a year before the Germans could announce that they had been "pacified".

Development was slow because Germany had never been completely solid on the idea of colonies. Government funds were insufficient to put the country on a sound economic footing. But by 1914 conditions had markedly improved. German settlers were beginning to earn a living, a few railroads had been laid down and some highways had been hacked out.

After the First World War the German settlers were sent home. Their estates were sold, and German East Africa became Tanganyika Territory, the mandate system making it a free country open to all peoples of Allied nations. Certain areas of the former German colony were handed to Portugal, to be included in the Portuguese colony of Mozambique. And the Ruanda-Urundi district was mandated to Belgium.

In 1925 German nationals were allowed to come back to Tanganyika. Two hundred of them, most of them former settlers, returned in that year. By 1938 there were enough Nazis to embarrass the Tanganyika administration. During the Munich crisis the Nazis were believed to be planning to sabotage an important hydro-electric works which supplied power to the vast sisal plantations. They were telling the natives that Germany would be in possession of Tanganyika inside six months, that native taxes would be reduced and that wages would be increased. On the insistence of members of the Tanganyika League, troops of the King's Africa Rifles were immediately dispatched to the affected areas. The net result was that the Nazis remained quiet. A show of force startled them, caught them off balance. They had never believed that England would do it.

The Germans in Tanganyika were not so well organized as they were in South-west Africa. There were, of course, fewer of them, and they were scattered all over the country. There were no Nazi youth organization, no Deutsche Bund, no Nazified schools—and, most important of all, there were no naturalized German officials to plan a subversive programme and get away with it because of their British naturalization. In South-west Africa, British subjects of German origin could make themselves as unpleasant as they knew how—and did. In Tanganyika they remained Germans—and they knew very well that a definite limit was set by the Tanganyika administration to their activities. None realized this better than Baron von Oenhausen, chief Fuehrer of the Tanganyika Nazis and a personal friend of Hitler.

Between 1924 and 1939 the Nazis permitted only specially picked Germans to settle in the mandate. They were trained at German colonial schools, where the emphasis was placed as much on political instruction as on the intricacies of running a plantation. The German settlers were financed by the German Colonial Society in Berlin until they were able to stand on their own feet. Then the German exporting companies took them over, marketed their produce for them, paid for it in blocked marks—i.e. money that could only be spent in Germany. The operating expenses of the plantations and their living expenses were practically the only real return these Germans received. That was why, from a purely economic viewpoint, they wanted Tanganyika given back to

Germany. While the grip of the German companies would unquestionably remain, they would at least see the profits of their labours.

There was every indication that the Colonial Office in London was playing a shrewd game in Tanganyika. While it was virtuously sticking to the terms of the mandate treaty, it was earnestly trying by other means to limit the flood of Nazis into the territory. It so happened that the British authorities refused to consider a policy of pushing the natives off their land to make way for an influx of white settlers. When the English settlers weren't grumbling about the Nazis they were criticizing the British Government for keeping Tanganyika a "closed country". Their criticism was based on the fact that demands for clearing native peasants off land free of the cursed tsetse-fly (nearly seventy-five per cent of Tanganyika is infested with the tsetse-fly) were always rejected. The Colonial Office's argument was that Tanganyika was not a British colony, but a mandate in which the interests of the native population came first. This was not a particularly hypocritical argument. It was at least ninety per cent sincere. For many years in Britain's colonies, protectorates and mandates, systems described as "indirect rule" have given the native populations in the rural areas some semblance of self-rule. Local native Chiefs and councils have authority to administer the everyday matters of the tribe. They have, of course, no legislative power, and the councils are supervised by white officials. In Tanganyika "indirect rule" has worked with a minimum of friction. Only on rare occasions has the white overseer been forced to intervene and veto the decisions of Chiefs. On the slopes of Kilimanjaro, highest mountain in Africa, the British have permitted the industrious Chaga tribe to organize their own co-operative coffee plantations. The Chagas have made an outstanding success of them. They are probably the richest natives on the continent.

This policy of "indirect rule"—even though it was *very* indirect—happened to fit in with the task of preventing Nazi influence in the mandate from spreading further. The English settlers did not appear to see through this policy. The fact was that there were more German settlers than English, that Germany was continually sending out more, that England was sending out none. If the Government had opened up new land, the buyers would have been Germans, not Englishmen. In time all the productive areas of Tanganyika would have become German-owned, and Tanganyika's economy would have become dominated by the Nazi Government and the big German companies. The mandate system would have become a farce. If more English settlers had been living in Tanganyika the Colonial Office *might* have changed its policy of keeping the natives on their land. It is therefore entirely possible that the natives have the German infiltration to thank, at least indirectly, for the fact that they still profitably occupy their own land. Today many of them grow rubber. In July, 1942, the British Ministry of Supply gave rubber priority over all other products in Tanganyika. A staff of local rubber experts encouraged the natives with attractive prices to collect all the wild rubber possible. Over 10,000,000 acres of derelict rubber plantations are being cleared and have already started to show returns.

Before the war some German colonists would push into some of the



fertile districts of the mandate and build settlements. The English settlers would appeal to the administration. The Germans had taken over land; they had broken the law. But they would refuse blankly to leave. And invariably the administration would back down, fearing international complications if they drove the Germans off their newly found land by force. This appeasement was what infuriated the English. "If *we* grabbed a piece of land," they would say, "the authorities wouldn't hesitate to push *us* off. But the Germans—they can get away with it."

And when the English settlers weren't complaining about the lack of land-settlement schemes they were protesting about the 30,000 Indians who monopolized ownership of shops, hotels, movie houses, office buildings and virtually all business interests except the raising of crops.

The British Government, meanwhile, was also worrying about something that had apparently escaped the attention of Tanganyika's Englishmen: Japan. The Nipponese had taken full advantage of Tanganyika as a free market. German import houses frequently complained about Japanese competition. In 1937 the British Empire's share of the territory's trade was 41·7 per cent, Japan's was 23·8 per cent and Germany's 13·4 per cent. Japan's cheap cotton goods found a ready sale among the natives; not even India's cheap labour factories could give the same value.

Up to the outbreak of war it was generally believed that Tanganyika was where the interests of Berlin and Tokyo would clash. In 1942, however, there were indications that Hitler would leave Tanganyika's fate to the Japanese. The East African coast lies within the Japanese Navy's sphere of operations rather than that of Hitler's U-boats. The Nazis appear willing to give up their claims to Tanganyika in Japan's favour if Honourable Nip Fleet will do its exalted stuff in these waters and hit Allied convoys on their way to the Persian Gulf.

## XXIII

### THE BELGIAN CONGO

IF WE WERE TO TAKE OFFICIAL HISTORIES SERIOUSLY WE COULD REST happily in the thought that Africa was partitioned for the primary purpose of bringing "culture and Christianity" to the natives. The truth is that African colonial history, as recorded by the Governments represented there, is one of the greatest whitewashes of all time. No colonial power can be absolved from this premise, although Britain, as far as Africa is concerned, grabbed her share of the spoils with less bloodshed than most.

What is the more extraordinary is that the man-in-the-street in France, Britain or Belgium knows that his country's overseas possessions were scandalously acquired; he knows that many of the "heroes" who fought to take them were nothing more than astute fortune-hunters and sometimes ambitious crooks who passed themselves off—and succeeded for a time—as super-patriots. The citizen did not learn these things

in the schoolroom history books. In fact, he is frequently unable to tell you exactly *how* he knows them. But the facts have usually been handed down from father to son, and sometimes supplemented by the occasional publication of suppressed colonial documents.

The above is a particularly necessary prologue when writing about the Belgian Congo. Its history between 1884 and 1908 is probably the blackest in all Africa. Blame, however, did not rest with either the Belgian Governments or the Belgian people of that period. There was only one man who could be accused of the outrages which reduced the native population from between 20,000,000 and 40,000,000 in 1890 to 8,500,000 in 1911—King Leopold II, monarch of the Belgians.

The Belgian Congo's present and pre-war years are blessed with an enlightened native policy. The black man here is the best-fed, the best-housed and best-educated in all the territories from the Cape to Cairo. The Congo's Second World War years are a fine tribute to these tough, hard-working natives and to the unconquerable spirit of the Belgians who rule it. For together they have turned the colony into a tremendous source of vital materials for the Allied war effort.

But to start with the Congo's history. In 1860 Prince Leopold (he had not yet succeeded to the throne) warned the Belgians that they would have to move fast "if we do not want to see all the best positions, already scarce enough, occupied by other nations more enterprising". Five years later, when he became King, the Belgian colonial movement was Leopold II's pet hobby. He was considerably influenced by Henry M. Stanley's reports on Dr. Livingstone, and very shocked by Dr. Livingstone's accounts of the African slave trade under the control of the Arabs.

As one official history puts it: "The King's mind was made up. He would assume the task of stamping out slavery and would, at the same time, give an African colony to Belgium." In 1884 the Congo Free State was created under control of the "International Congo Association". The Association's chairman was Leopold II and its declared policy was "the purpose of promoting the civilization and commerce of Africa and for other humane and benevolent purposes". Under the Congo Act the King became sovereign of the Congo, recognized by all the other European Powers which were scrambling to find a place in Africa. The Congo Act pledged him to wipe out the slave trade, to "watch over the preservation of native tribes", to assure freedom of trade in the territory to other Powers, to prevent the establishment of any trade monopolies.

As far as Leopold II was concerned, these rather inhibiting clauses of the Congo Act were only to be observed until he had built an army in the Congo region which would enable him to violate them with impunity. By 1890 his army, recruited from the tribes of the upper Congo, was thousands strong, *and raised to a large extent by the very slave methods he had sworn to abolish*. Debates in the Belgian Parliament fifteen years later disclosed that the King had distributed circulars to the whites in the Congo promising bonuses for every native delivered to a recruiting station. Ninety francs was paid for men over one metre thirty-five centimetres, sixty-five francs for youths of the same height, and fifteen francs for male children over one metre twenty centimetres.

With an established army standing behind him, Leopold II cajoled the co-signers of the Congo Act into allowing him to impose duties on all goods entering the Free State. The King explained that he needed this revenue to finance a military campaign against the Arabs. In addition, the Belgian Government voted him £1,000,000 in return for a promise that the Congo would become Belgium's when the King died. Foreign business interests in the Congo protested that Leopold's policy was throttling private trade and that the forced recruiting of natives was stirring up trouble. The King managed to drive the Arabs from the Congo, and—his main objective—captured their huge stocks of valuable ivory.

With the Arabs out of the way, Leopold set about the task of expropriating native lands. "Vacant land must be considered as belonging to the State," he declared in an official decree, dated July 1, 1885, just one year after he had signed the Congo Act. In Europe the various Powers, knowing the tricks of the colonial trade, made no protest. But what Leopold meant by vacant land was all land not actually covered by native villages. The natives were virtually confined to the area of their settlements on the river banks, unable by law to hunt for their food in the "vacant" forests or to gather the raw materials for their crafts and trade. The river banks of the Congo, as Stanley found them during his explorations in 1879 and 1882, were populated by a diligent, hard-working population of natives of about 40,000,000. Flourishing settlements dotted up and down the water's edge numbered from 5000 to 40,000 natives. They had developed their crafts, weaving cloths and beating out metal weapons and domestic utensils, and the native merchants had traded with each other, making voyages of hundreds of miles in canoes up and down the river. Wauters, Belgium's Congo historian, described them thus: "They are warriors only for defence; they are one and all traders."

But under Leopold II they were traders and free men no more. Confined to limited areas, their standard of living was much reduced. But somehow they still managed to find districts which were not yet occupied by the authorities. They collected rubber and ivory, bartering it for the consumer goods offered by the European traders. Leopold, backed by his army, then ordered the natives to cease all trade with the Europeans. The natives were forbidden to collect ivory and rubber, let alone sell it. And the merchants' trade was destroyed, and the traders themselves were finally forced to leave.

The position so far, then, was that free trade under the Congo Act had become a farce, that Leopold II had viciously broken his pious promise of watching over "the preservation of native tribes", since their right to trade among themselves, as well as their right to do business with the white merchants, had been taken away. Having banished the Arabs and now the foreign traders, Leopold had at last created for himself a gigantic area of rich raw materials which he could exploit to his own personal advantage without competition or interference from anyone.

In 1891, therefore, Leopold II dispatched a secret message to the Governor of the Congo, ordering him and his officials to "exploit the produce of the forests". Congo officials were paid a bonus on rubber and ivory "proportionate to the cost of exploitation". This meant that

the lower the price paid to the labouring native, the bigger the bonus to the official. Leopold denied that such instructions had ever been issued when the German Government charged that the bonus system was a violation of the Congo Act. But the whole story was revealed some years later in Belgian Parliamentary debates.

Leopold found that even under this system the "produce of the forests" was not exploited fast enough. He decided to tax the natives, forcing them to deliver, without payment, a certain amount of rubber and ivory each month. Between 1899 and 1906 more than £13,700,000 worth of rubber was added to the King's coffers by this method alone. The taxes demanded of the natives were so large that in the majority of cases the tribes either refused or were unable to pay them. King Leopold's armies, however, usually managed to enforce the tax system. When tribes refused to deliver the stipulated quantities, Leopold's soldiers raided native villages and carried off hostages.

The report of a Belgian merchant of that period says: "There is not an inhabited village left in four days' steaming through a country formerly so rich, today utterly ruined. The soldiers sent out to get rubber and ivory are depopulating the country. They find the quickest and cheapest method is to raid villages, seize prisoners, and have them redeemed afterwards for ivory." The British Government added its evidence to Leopold's atrocities in an official White Book published in 1904. It said that after villages had been raided and the required amount of rubber or ivory extorted from the helpless population, King Leopold's white officers left one or two black soldiers to guard it against any uprising. They were told not to waste cartridges, but to cut off the right hand or sexual organ of any native they shot and bring it to their superiors. The hands or sexual organs would then be checked against the number of cartridges used.

With the tacit approval of the British Government the Congo Reform Association was later founded in London. It was an organization of citizens determined to expose the Leopold hypocrisies and atrocities. One of its leading members, E. D. Morel, published three books on the Congo. The Anti-Slavery Society in London collected a wealth of material, including British and American consular reports, the accounts of merchants, travellers and Catholic missionaries. The Catholic missionaries in the Congo deserve a special place in the campaign that finally brought the Leopold system crumbling down. They were among the first to protest the wholesale killing of natives carried out by Leopold's armies. And they continued to protest even after the heads of the Catholic Party in Belgium had joined Leopold's counter-campaign challenging the exposés.

Morel's books were widely publicized. In *The Black Man's Burden* he quoted the reports of two travellers named Murdoch and Scrivener who wandered up the Congo in 1903 and 1907 and found "long miles of ruined mouldering villages thickly strewn with skeletons". He told of villages which in five years had been reduced from a population of 140,000 to 18,000. With his evidence the Congo Reform Association accused Leopold of widespread bribery, of imposing a rule of terror by ordering his officers and troops in the Congo to rape, murder, loot and to burn down native villages. The Association declared that Leopold had

deliberately instituted this bestial policy in order to amass a personal fortune in the quickest possible manner. Specific charges were levelled against the people whom Leopold had bribed and to whom he had granted concessions in the Congo. The Association flourished fists full of documentary evidence, but even though many of the accused persons were living in England, not one of them sued for libel.

The American Missionary Societies in a report to the United States Congress in 1905 listed some atrocities of King Leopold's rule. They told the story of one Belgian official who had forced natives to drink his urine because they had failed to meet their rubber quota under the tax system. Another official, as described in Morel's book, *Red Rubber*, compelled the natives to eat the rubber if it was not properly prepared for export. When the natives died in agony, the Court of Justice in the Congo ruled that "the introduction into the stomach by the mouth of an elastic substance was not productive of after ill-effects". Fortunately for the presiding judge, he was not asked to prove it.

But the worst features of King Leopold's regime were never seriously challenged by responsible Governments. That would have provoked war between the signatories of the Congo Act. It was public opinion, not only in England, but in Belgium itself, that finally stopped the Leopold massacres. Leopold naturally denied all the criticism brought against his personal rule of the Congo. To protect himself he had built up an intricate system of propaganda and bribery in Europe. He had handed out as much as two-fifths of the Congo to companies, the directors of which were people who knew too much and who might try to blackmail him if he did not make it worth their while to keep their mouths shut. But Leopold astutely retained for himself half the shares of each of these companies. Most of these concessions made money hand over fist. The shares of one of the biggest, owned by the Abir Company, were issued at around £4 and were soon changing hands at £700. The journalists, bankers, officials and even leading members of the Catholic Church who held these shares thus had a vested interest in making sure that the Leopold regime persisted. Leopold therefore enjoyed the backing of hundreds of "respected" citizens when he disputed the reports of the Congo Reform Association. He freely bribed journalists and politicians to defend the Congo system.

But bribery, corruption and wholesale massacre of native peoples were not permitted to go on for ever. The scandals of the Congo finally reached the doorsteps of the common man in Europe. The cry for immediate reform and the demands for the release of the Congo from Leopold's grip were so loud that the shares of the concession companies fell abruptly. Lord Lansdowne, British Foreign Secretary, proposed that an international committee be called to investigate the Leopold regime. But the French Government opposed the suggestion because the French colonies were also guilty of some of the same crimes Leopold had committed in the Congo. Lansdowne's proposal was discreetly dropped.

By 1908 the full story of King Leopold's rule of the Congo was bared. His elaborate system of bribery began to topple, his former supporters started to unload their shares on to the market, causing a panic that sent their value dropping to a few francs. In the same year the Belgian Government formally took over the Congo Free State,

renaming it the Belgian Congo. Reforms were carried out gradually, until the atrocities were things of the past. The white-haired old King was never called to account for his misrule or his mockery of the Congo Act under which he had promised to develop the Congo "for humane and benevolent" purposes. He died in 1909, a bitter, hard-bitten old man. A few hours before his death he called his Prime Minister to his bedside. "If you yield so much as an inch of the Congo," he is reported in an official history to have said, "your old King will rise from his grave to blame you."

And to this day not an inch of the Belgian Congo has been yielded—not even back to the natives who live there. There is no "reserve" system in the Congo, no large areas set aside where a "surplus" black labour force is settled. This is because the Congo Administration intends to use every ounce of labour it can lay its hands on. The Congo exists under the Belgians for the primary purpose of developing its resources. The attitude towards the native population of 10,000,000 is not one of sympathy or kindness, but rather one of strict discipline. The natives are organized and used for strictly business reasons. The white population numbers only about 40,000. It consists of officials and business men and Belgian refugees, a mere handful intending to stay on in the Congo indefinitely. In contrast to the Union of South Africa, where 2,000,000 whites have made their permanent homes, the Belgians have set up no industrial colour bar. There was no necessity for it, because the Congo was never intended to admit large numbers of permanent white settlers who would take up trades and face the problem of competing with black rivals.

The Belgians, therefore, were not faced with the same kind of a native problem as were the South Africans. *Their* problem was to build the native population into an efficient labour force, able to perform even some of the most skilled work. The Belgians would never say, as the South Africans do, that theirs is a white man's country. It is a country of blacks *supervised* by a small group of whites. The Belgians realized early that the wealth of the Congo could not be exploited without a keenly intelligent, healthy, strong black population. That is why the natives have better medical facilities, more and better schools, and, broadly speaking, better food than in any other African colony. But it is not sentimentality or love for the natives that has inspired this policy. It is what the Belgians like to call a *practical* colonial policy.

At the present time I would say that the Congo native is the happiest in Africa. Whether he will always be is another question entirely. The probability is that the British colonies and mandates will in the future offer a freer life to its blacks. It is only the transition policy in the British territories that so inadequately serves the natives' interests. The attitude of British colonial officialdom towards the blacks is more often than not one of sentimentality. Many of the officials *love* the natives. The medical services given to natives in Tanganyika, for instance, are hopelessly insufficient, but the British officials there would be conscience-stricken if they did not make sure that they had done all they could. In British colonies there is no question of feeding the natives in order to make them better workmen. They are fed in times of famine, not because the British officials want to maintain a labour force, but because

the natives are human beings and the officials would consider it a crime to let them die.

There is no intention in the Belgian Congo of eventually giving the natives their freedom—that is, freedom from being virtually forced to labour for the white man. The British in some of their African colonies are training the natives for eventual self-rule. That is the essential difference between the two colonial systems. There's no doubt that the practical Belgian system is more inclined to satisfy the natives, at least for the present and immediate future. The native looks forward to the day when he might become a locomotive-driver on the 3500 miles of railroad, a truck-driver on the 45,000 miles of highways, a skilled mechanic, a technical worker on the big palm-oil plantations, a clerk or any of a dozen other "middle-class" occupations all well paid, giving the native a chance to eat his fill, buy his wife (or wives) the things she craves, and raise his children free from diseases and able to adopt the same good life. That is not what *all* the natives enjoy; it is what they *all* look forward to. But a great many live like that, and they prefer it infinitely to the British or South African system.

The chief feature of native life in the Congo is that very few of them starve. *They are not allowed to go without food because a black labourer with an empty belly cannot work.*

Natives who own land in the Congo do not have all the rights of ownership. If a black landowner becomes an employee of a company or of the Government and can pay his taxes with his salary, it is probable that he will have to neglect his land. He won't have the time to cultivate it while he is working, although he may plan to come back to it in a few years when he has saved up some money. But if he neglects his land the Government will take it from him. The Government rules that all native-owned land must be cultivated, and, in certain areas, its produce must be sold to the white man at a price fixed by the Government. This, of course, is forced labour with a slight difference. But the Belgian officials, backed by private enterprise and Government-owned concerns, charge that the native is lazy and indigent if left to his own devices, that he would let himself starve if the Government didn't threaten him into cultivating the land. This is one of those pernicious half-truths that drop from the mouths of so many white officials in Africa. It is true that the native would produce only enough to pay his taxes and to feed himself and his family if the Belgians had instituted the white man's system of property and property rights. There would be no surplus for the big companies to buy up at fixed prices, to sell to the consumer in some far-away land at a handsome profit. That is the main reason for the policy of forced cultivation—and the official knows it as well as the Government, the companies and the natives.

The Belgian Congo administration has always sought to give the impression that the native tribes have not been pushed off the land, that only lands where the native is *not* living have been appropriated by the Government and sold as concessions to private companies. This is another of those half-truths. The native all over Africa has never settled in one spot for any great length of time. He has constantly moved from one area to another. He has grown his food, dug his wells, and when he has exhausted the fertility of the soil he has moved on to another

productive centre. This was due not to laziness or indigence, but to plain ignorance of modern agricultural methods. When the white man came to "exploit the produce of the forests" he found the natives settled in certain defined areas. He did not order them off the land they had occupied but he forbade them to migrate into other lands. To the natives this was virtual imprisonment and eventual starvation. The white man did not attempt to show them how the land could yield more and so lessen the need for a periodic migration. And all the land not occupied by the blacks automatically became the property of the white man. This method of pure theft served two important purposes: it gave the white men land to exploit, and forced the natives by starvation to work for the white men.

Today the natives are largely employees of the companies, whether they "own" land or not. Taxes which must be paid in cash keep the natives working *for the white man*. And today vast areas of land are owned by four concession companies, all of which are half-owned by the Belgian Government. This is a hang-over from Leopold II's time. The wily old King never handed out any concession without retaining a half-share for himself, and when he died the Belgian Government inherited the King's financial interests. Thus the Government has just as much interest in the development of the Belgian Congo as a producer of wealth as the companies. There is no neutral, disinterested body to represent native opinion and aspirations. If the natives were one day to organize themselves into an articulate group, demanding certain rights of self-government or protection from their exploitation by "private" interests, the Government would be just as vehemently opposed to their demands as the concession companies. The Government, in other words, would have a vested interest in the preservation of the *status quo*. On the other hand, it is *because* the Government is financially entrenched in the Belgian Congo that the native is afforded a better material life. And, in turn, he is given that life to make him a more able and a more satisfied worker—so that he may more efficiently "exploit the produce of the forests" to the financial advantage of the Government. Under this system the native may never advance politically, but may always better himself materially. And as a parting shot the Belgian official will point out that a native with a full belly does not have to interest himself in politics.

The fall of Belgium brought the Belgian Congo into the public eye for the first time since the scandals of Leopold II. The collapse of France and the escape of the Belgian Government from France to Britain made the world wonder for a few brief days which way the Congo would go. But there was no need for apprehension. The Congo unhesitatingly pledged itself to the Allied cause. The few pro-Fascist officials, who for some years had belonged to the colonial wing of Léon Degrelle's Belgian Fascist Party, made no attempt to hold the Congo for the Nazis. They were hopelessly outnumbered by a population of furious Belgians who had seen their homeland overrun by the Germans for the second time in twenty-six years.

On June 18, 1940, Albert de Vleeschauwer, Minister for Colonies in the Belgian exiled Government, was given virtually dictatorial powers



over the Congo. The colony's economy was drastically reorganized. Every effort was made to increase the production of raw materials needed by the Allies, and to cut down on imports of consumer goods. The great copper-mines of Katanga in the Lower Congo, ranking high among copper-producing countries, began to work on a twenty-four-hour basis. The Congo's copper output now exceeds 150,000 tons annually. Tin production, before the war amounting to 10,000 tons out of a yearly world production of 200,000, has been stepped up. Cobalt, a strategic metal much in demand in war industries, is mined with great success, production amounting to sixty per cent of the world's total.

Since the fall of the Dutch East Indies, the Belgian Congo has sought to increase the rubber output. Rubber plantations in 1942 extended over 12,500 acres, producing 1,000 tons of rubber a year. Palm oil is produced at the rate of 100,000 tons every year, and the chief company operating the huge plantations is linked with Lever Brothers, Ltd.

The Congo also produces 20,000 tons of coffee, cultivates 1,000,000 acres of cotton, mines more than half the world's production of diamonds, including the all-important industrial stones, and ninety per cent of the world's radium output. Other products include cocoa, copal gum, sugar and ivory.

A native and white army of more than 100,000 troops protect the Congo's 902,000 square miles and the 20,500 square miles of Ruanda-Urundi, the mandated territory formerly part of German East Africa. These forces are supplemented by an undisclosed number of American troops which arrived in the last quarter of 1942. Thirty thousand Congo troops helped defeat the Italians in Ethiopia. They captured 15,000 Italian and native soldiers, but their prize exhibit took the form of nine embarrassed Italian Generals. Britain and the United States have supplied the Congo with light weapons. But the Belgians are naturally anxious to build up fully equipped divisions complete with tanks and howitzers and an umbrella of latest-type bombers and fighter planes. Towards the end of 1942 the phenomenal increase in U.S. production enabled Washington to promise early delivery of heavy weapons to the Belgian Congo.

The armies of the Congo and those of General Charles de Gaulle in French Equatorial Africa are Southern Africa's first line of defence. Any attack on the Belgian Congo would not only test the strength and skill of the Allied forces defending it; it would also test the wisdom of the Belgian native policy. The Belgians rightfully expect the natives to remain loyal. I say *rightfully* because the Congo native gets good treatment compared with those in some other colonies. But if these natives proved unreliable, a radical change in native policies would have to take place in the Union of South Africa and in Britain's colonies. Without such a change, there would be no hope of effective resistance. It would be Singapore all over again.

## XXIV

## AXIS PLAN FOR AFRICA

LONG BEFORE HITLER'S RISE TO POWER THE GERMAN COLONIAL SOCIETY had been established to study the problems of fruitful colonial exploitation. Its primary purpose was to produce a rigid economic and scientific programme which would be applied to Germany's former overseas possessions the moment a Reich Army reoccupied them. The leaders of the Society were not necessarily Nazis. They were Germans who had been repatriated from Africa after the First World War—army officers, farmers and the representatives of commercial interests once established there. They received no encouragement from the Weimar regime and Hitler's *Mein Kampf* had stated flatly that the "New Germany" would not concern itself with colonies. But the Society constantly struggled to interest the Nazi Party in its aims, especially when Nazi influence began to show signs of spreading.

It was due almost entirely to the Society's efforts that Hitler later changed his mind on the question of colonies. In 1932 the Nazi Party formally made colonial demands part of its platform when Marshal Goering, whose father had been first Governor of South-west Africa, opened a National Socialist colonial exhibition at Frankfurt. From that moment every member of the Colonial Society became a member of the Nazi Party. And the Colonial Society was secretly absorbed as a sub-division of the Nazi Party.

By 1934 the Society was a full-blown department of the Nazi Government. Hitler appointed as its chief General Franz Ritter von Epp, a retired officer whom the Fuehrer had named Governor of Bavaria the year before. Von Epp's background made him a perfect spokesman for Germany's colonial claims. He had taken part in the pre-World War I scramble for the African colonies. He had helped to smash the Herrero native rebellion in South-west Africa. He had been leader of the veterans of Germany's colonial wars. And he had spent the post-war years campaigning for the restoration of the colonies, attempting to combine all Germany's pro-colonial organizations into a single unit and urging the members of these organizations to support the Nazi Party.

Von Epp injected new life into the colonial movement. With Nazi Party funds he organized nearly 7,000 local groups, enrolled more than 1,000,000 members, distributed masses of printed propaganda, trained hundreds of lecturers recruited from Germans repatriated from the colonies after the First World War and held scores of meetings throughout Germany. Two German colonial schools were revived and several more were established. The oldest and biggest of these is the Deutsche Kolonial Schule at Witzenhausen in Southern Germany. Its principal is Dr. Karl W. Koch, a German scientist who was commissioned by the South African Government in 1906 to combat cattle diseases. The school offers a five-year course in agriculture, native languages, forestry, medicine, chemistry, meteorology and other subjects which help to equip a man for life in the African colonies.

A women's colonial university at Rendsburg, twenty-nine miles from

Kiel in Northern Germany devotes its curriculum to the duties of a colonist's wife. But its course is hardly less rigorous than that of the men's schools. The women learn to shoot, to prepare chemical fertilizers, to round up cattle, to ride a horse. They get an intensive domestic-science training which leads to carpentry and to the cultivation of a vegetable garden. They are also taught how to deal with pregnancy (their own) and even to instruct their husbands in the art of midwifery.

Another school at Ladenburg, a few miles from Berlin, was established to train Nazi propagandists and party leaders, administrative officials and school-teachers. The Nazis fear that German colonists might go astray politically once they leave the Reich. The Ladenburg school is therefore as important as the others. Research in tropical diseases was carried on in Hamburg at the Tropical Institute of the Hanseatic University. It was here that *Germanin* was discovered, the only real cure for sleeping sickness. And here, too, the German Red Cross has placed several hundred nurses who are learning how to treat tropical diseases and to improvise medical facilities under conditions they are likely to find in isolated outposts of the colonies.

At Reinbeck, near Hamburg, regiments of young foresters are trained at the German Institute of Foreign and Colonial Forestry. While no Reich scientific expeditions were permitted before the war to visit the mandated territories, the Nazis have apparently decided what they intend to do with the forest lands of Central Africa. The German Colonial Society boasts knowledge of every tree and has already decided which ones they intend to cut down for export. With a staff recruited from the Reinbeck school, the Nazis intend to inaugurate their forestry programme immediately the German Army has taken over.

One of the most ambitious Nazi plans for Africa concerns the harnessing of the continent's great waterways. The German Union for Colonial Technique is responsible for a fifty-year plan to re-hydrate Africa with the aid of half a dozen new dams. Dr. Wolfgang Soergel, a Munich geophysicist and a leading member of the German Union, plans to build a gigantic dam—the world's biggest—across the Congo River, affecting 400,000 square miles of hitherto unproductive land and providing about 240,000,000 hydro-electric horse-power. Dr. Soergel contends that his project would not only serve Africa economically, but would improve the climate of the affected area and lessen the danger of tropical diseases. He is disturbed because many of Africa's great rivers which used to water the interior basins have cut through mountains and now flow out into the sea. Plans have thus been made for damming the Zambesi, Orange, Limpopo, Shasi and Cunene rivers. In his own words and in a sentence, Dr. Soergel wants to remove "that senseless squandering of forces and that plutocratic narrow-mindedness wrongly called 'colonial development'."

How the Nazis intend to harness Africa's vast source of black manpower is a little-publicized feature of their scheme. The truth is that Africa would become a slave continent once again. It would be run along totalitarian lines, but in actual material benefits the natives would probably be better off than they had been under the rule of the democracies. The Nazis would probably take the Belgian Congo's native policy as a rough guide and then "improve" it. The natives would

receive the finest medical attention, the best food in order to maintain a physically fit labour supply. While wages would be kept low, they would be sufficient to purchase mass-produced, cheap commodities which would be sent out from German factories. The Nazis would not tolerate unemployment; they would confiscate all native-owned lands; they would offer bonuses for large families, abolish tribal institutions, burn down unsanitary native villages and substitute prison-like brick dwellings, deal with uprisings ruthlessly and swiftly, forbid movements of natives from one area to another except by Government order and deport the missionaries. The net result would be a population well fed, in excellent health, able to acquire some of the material benefits of a scientific age, but hard-working and mercilessly regimented. The Belgian Congo's policy of high wages for skilled workers, its schools and missionary societies, its freedom to natives who wish to change jobs would be dropped for ever.

And the British policy of native-owned plantations and of gradually preparing the natives for self-rule would of course be abandoned. In most of Britain's African possessions, however, the natives would probably only *feel* the loss of their lands and their cattle. Many natives believe that Britain's promises of self-rule are a hollow mockery. They can see no concerted move towards it. In Rhodesia, for instance, where there is a permanent white population, the British Government's policy of "trusteeship" has only tended to protect the natives from the whites; it has shown few signs of giving them real freedom. In the British West African colonies blacks hold some important administrative positions, but the Government would have to wrest control from the powerful companies, like Lever Brothers, before native self-government could take the long step to completion. In the Union of South Africa the British Government has no jurisdiction whatsoever. In the South African Protectorates, Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland the tendency is more towards absorbing these territories into the Union rather than granting them their freedom. The British mandates are the only territories which seem consciously to follow a policy designed in the natives' best interests; and even in these lands it cannot yet be said that the British are doing more than protect the blacks from would-be white settlers.

Unfortunately, colonial officials who believe the natives should eventually be trained for full self-government are few and far between. Despite their genuine respect for the natives as a people, and in some cases even their love for them, these officials, almost to a man, do not believe that they are or ever will be capable of governing themselves without white supervision. It hardly matters for the moment whether the British Government believes this or not. The fact is that most of the officials it sends out do not. And the result is that the natives themselves, while enjoying the supervised rule of their tribal chiefs, do not look forward to the prospect of real political freedom, and their lack of education has prevented them from demanding it articulately.

This picture makes Germany's colonial plans particularly dangerous. Most of the natives have never even *realized* that Britain's policy was to train them for eventual self-rule. The Nazis therefore would take away nothing more concrete than a promise. While the German confiscation of native lands and cattle and the break-up of tribal "indirect rule"

would unquestionably be resented and perhaps forcibly opposed, material compensations, like regular meals, might have a decided appeal. For in Africa the political ideology of white rulers holds little interest for the uneducated native. *He asks only to be fed.* He is likely to take to any system—Fascist or democratic—that gives him a square meal. Under the rule of the European Powers and the Union of South Africa, millions of natives have never had a square meal in their lives *and have never even been promised one.* Unless Democracy fills his belly now and, in addition, *promises* to fill it in the future, the African native will continue to be a political enigma. Maintain the *status quo* in Africa and Nazi propaganda cannot help but gain ground. The issue is as simple as that. But neither the British Government nor the Government of the Union of South Africa has yet revealed a sufficient understanding of it. The principal reason for the absence of an enlightened native policy, the chief feature of which need not be immediate political freedom but merely a higher standard of living, is lack of imagination and *fear.* The South Africans, especially, tend to scoff at the idea of a Nazi conquest of Africa. They do not believe that such a thing is possible. But many of them are aware that a Japanese offensive on their shores may come. Despite this threat they have not yet permitted the Bantus to bear arms in defence of their country. They admit to a fear that an armed Bantu might turn his gun on them and leave the door wide open for the invaders. So far they have refused to eradicate this possibility by giving the Bantu something to fight for besides the *status quo.* And so the South Africans remain largely unprepared to meet an invader because of a reluctance to yield a repressive native policy that naturally makes the Bantu an unreliable soldier.

After the collapse of France the German military strategists began to talk seriously of invading Africa. The bridgehead to the continent had already been established by the Italians and was later to be reinforced by the armoured divisions of Marshal Erwin Rommel. In Berlin the shares of German companies which had once operated in the former colonies began to boom. The Cameroon Railroad Company's stocks rose from 71 to 187. The shares of the German East Africa Company advanced from 76 in December, 1939, to 164 in September, 1940. The shares of forty other colonial business concerns had doubled since the latter months of 1939.

While the fall of the French Republic had aided in the general rise of German colonial shares, Berlin business circles appeared to be chiefly influenced by the rumoured details of a military undertaking in Africa. The Nazis and the Japanese, it was said, were planning a gigantic pincer movement on Africa. Japan was to take over Madagascar as a stepping-stone to the Union of South Africa. Cape Town, Durban and the Union's industrial centres were to be subjected to a surprise bombing attack. The Afrikaaner fifth column was to paralyse the Union's resistance by sabotaging communications and factories, destroying grounded 'planes, spreading false rumours and urging Afrikaaner army officers to lead their men in a revolt against the authorities. The Portuguese Governor of Mozambique would receive an ultimatum from the Japanese on Madagascar demanding that he permit Japanese troops to land there and establish bases for a land attack on the Union. If the ultimatum were to be rejected, the Japanese would quickly reduce Lourenço Marques

to ruins, following up with an invasion of Portuguese territory. Portuguese Angola, on Africa's west coast and only 800 miles by air from Madagascar, would be attacked by waves of Japanese paratroops. They would also land in the South-west Africa mandate, seek to overthrow the police garrison, release the several thousand interned Nazis, provide them with arms and hold vital centres. After the first initial blow, Japanese troop transports, which would be hovering off the eastern coast of Madagascar, would move out under a protective umbrella of Japanese aircraft based on Madagascar, and attempt an invasion of the South African coastline. Landings would be made on both sides of important port towns, enemy troops besieging them by land and Japanese planes blasting them from the air. Farther north, the port of Dar Es Salaam in Tanganyika would be bombarded by Japanese naval units and raided by carrier-based aircraft. On the west coast a mixed force of Vichy Frenchmen and Germans would strike from Dakar at French Equatorial Africa. Brazzaville, General de Gaulle's headquarters in Africa, would be bombed. The Fighting French would then be fully occupied by the Nazis and would be unable to lend a hand down south. These plans were, fortunately, considerably revised on November 7, 1942, when the Allies invaded North Africa.

The shares of German colonials dropped when British forces took over Diego Suarez, Madagascar's naval base; and fell lower when the Allies completed the occupation of the island. The Axis plan had suffered a direct hit. The invasion of Southern Africa by the Asiatic partner of the Axis had at least been delayed. The Allied expedition to North Africa postpones indefinitely any plans Germany may have cherished for quick and profitable exploitation of Southern Africa. The Japanese threat, however, still remains.

## XXV

### AFRICA WANTS A FUTURE

THE WHITES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA ARE GOING TO BE DIFFICULT PEOPLE to manage when peace comes. An Allied victory will bring deep changes in their lives, deeper than those most of us who live in the democracies are likely to experience. This was made clear when former United States Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles said: "The principles of the Atlantic Charter must be guaranteed to the world as a whole—in all oceans and in all continents." It was a categorical statement; nobody could mistake its meaning. I am not suggesting that the whites living in Southern Africa will reject the Charter for themselves. But when it comes to applying the principles of this historic document to the "inferior" black peoples there are likely to be serious objections from some quarters. And that is putting it mildly.

I know how the arguments will run; I have heard some of them already from the lips of British colonials, South Africans and Belgians. Roosevelt and Churchill, it is said hopefully, did not have the native Africans in mind when they composed the Atlantic Charter; they

were referring only to the world's white folk and perhaps to the Chinese.

But the natives of Southern Africa are likely to change this line of thinking after the war. They have heard of the Atlantic Charter despite the attempts of many whites—among them officials—to hide it from them. And one wonders how the world would view the spectre of a white minority forcibly keeping millions of natives chained to the pre-war *status quo*. The whites, of course, will continue to insist that an "inferior intellect" prevents the blacks from becoming capable of governing themselves. The rest of the world, however, will insist on nothing of the sort—that is, if it is a wide-awake world, conscious of its responsibilities to those who fought to make it free. It will rapidly discover that the reason the blacks are pressed down in Southern Africa is not because the resident whites believe they cannot govern themselves or cannot rise to high levels of civilization; it is precisely because they know the blacks are only too capable of these things.

There is a general misunderstanding in the United States that all decisions pertaining to Britain's overseas possessions are made in London. This is true only of the colonies which are politically dependent territories. The British Dominions, including the Union of South Africa, are independent, self-governing countries, and the British Government has no more right to dictate internal policies than has the United States in the domestic affairs of the Argentine.

And it is in the Union of South Africa, an independent sovereign state and the only one of its size and influence in all Africa, that the whites are going to put up a struggle to preserve the *status quo*. This is not really a prediction; it is as certain as the rise of the tide. The *status quo* in South Africa means a cheap black labour force to exploit the gold-mines. And the gold-mines are the chief source of South Africa's wealth, the reason why South Africa offers its whites in normal times a standard of living almost as high as in the United States. *These mines would become unprofitable if worked by white labour at white wage rates.* No nuggets of gold are to be found in South Africa's mines; the black labourer hacks away at a narrow reef, often no more than a few inches thick, at a depth which varies between 500 and 6,000 feet. The ore he digs is brought up to the surface and goes through a complicated processing before the gold is separated from it. And several tons of ore must be dug out and processed to produce *one fine ounce of gold*. The cost of producing an ounce of gold is therefore high—higher than in other gold-producing countries. The black miner working for £4 to £6 per month enables the gold-mining companies to make huge profits. South Africa produces an average of £80,000,000 worth of gold annually—£40 per head of the white population. If the mines employed white labour the value of gold production would be slashed to a small fraction of the above figure. Many of the mines would have to close down. Cheap black labour, therefore, is the essential factor in the profitable mining of gold. It means simply that if South Africa is to continue to rely on gold for the bulk of its wealth, the Bantu must continue to labour for his pitifully small wages. South Africa's economy must undergo a drastic reorganization before the black man can enjoy the "improved labour standards, economic adjustments and social security" promised

to him by the Atlantic Charter. But how would South Africa live without gold? The answer to that question is simpler than it appears, but first a brief explanation of South Africa's "gold economy" is necessary.

South Africa concentrated almost all its peacetime industrial energy on the production of gold. The average investor put his money into gold because it offered the quickest and biggest returns. But South Africa also has tremendous deposits of iron ore, copper, asbestos, manganese, tin, lead, platinum, chrome, mica and graphite. These, along with the coal-mines and the handful of factories producing consumer goods, were known as "secondary" industries. The investing public's interest in them was limited. And development of these secondary industries was discouraged by the gold-mining companies and to a large extent by the Government. In the muddled pre-war economics the situation was figured this way: Gold exports would pay for almost all South Africa's imported consumer goods. Since Britain took most of the gold, it would be an unsound trade policy to refuse to take Britain's manufactured products. Industries in South Africa competing with British manufacturers would therefore have to be discouraged, even if it meant restricted exploitation of South Africa's abundant base-metal deposits. It was the common view in South Africa that Britain would stop buying up the gold output if the South Africans were inconsiderate enough to manufacture most of their own consumer goods. This would rob British manufacturers of a market and throw English workers out of their jobs. It was also understood that the fullest exploitation of South Africa's iron, copper, manganese and asbestos would make South Africa a major producer of these minerals, thereby upsetting the entire world market by creating too great an abundance. This in turn would wreck internationally controlled prices, curb profits, depress share values and decrease dividends.

Up in Johannesburg, the Union's gold-mining centre, the Chamber of Mines had its own personal reasons for not wanting to see South Africa's secondary industries flourish. The gold-mines' only big competitors for native labour were the farmers. Natives did not flock to the gold-mines of their own free will unless depressed circumstances at home forced them to; the mines maintained labour recruiting agents in the rural areas to ensure an adequate supply of black workers. The labour problem would become even more acute if producers of other minerals and owners of factories joined in the rush for native labour. It would tend to push up wage rates all over the country, forcing the gold-mines themselves to increase *theirs*.

Many business men have charged that the Chamber of Mines has the Government under its thumb; that because it represents the most powerful single interest in the country the Government does not dare to foster the growth of the secondary industries.

Now perhaps it is easier to see how South Africa could live without the gold-mines so long as it was unshackled by restrictive international production quotas and permitted to work the wealth of its earth to the full.

I know that when this appears in print a howl of protest will emanate from South Africa's gold-mining circles. I shall be accused of advocating the destruction of South Africa's economic life-blood. It will be



pointed out that South Africa became rich only because of its gold and that I am demanding the emergence of a poverty-stricken economy based on the development of unexploited copper, iron, manganese, etc. Well, I do most emphatically state that there will be no place for South Africa in a democratic post-war world if she does not attend to the business of providing an adequate livelihood for her Bantu workers. And any mining man will tell you that granting a living wage to these people would ruin his business. Unless the mining companies can resign themselves to the fact that profits and dividends must be necessarily lowered in order to pay a higher wage bill, then South Africa will have to look to its base metals for its economic life-blood. For in South Africa it is not a matter of the Bantus seeking higher wages *unfairly*; even anti-labour industrialists in the United States would agree that £6 per month—the highest wage paid to a Bantu foreman in the mines—is appallingly low. Moreover, some South Africans have pointed out that while a large percentage of the population is directly or indirectly employed by the gold-mining industry, seventy-five per cent of the dividends are paid to shareholders living abroad.

There is reason to believe, however, that some of the more far-sighted and far-thinking South African industrialists are already realizing that their country must develop an economy based on other minerals. But they are distinctly in the minority. A United States mission went to South Africa in 1942 to investigate the possibility of speeding up the production of strategic war metals. This mission now has permanent offices in Johannesburg. It is doing more good than most South Africans realize. By the end of the war base-metal production will have expanded tremendously, enabling South Africa to *employ at a living wage* thousands of Bantu workers and poor whites. This will force the gold-mines to follow suit—or go out of business.

So much for the economic problems of South Africa. As far as political changes are concerned there are indications that a few members of the Government have learned some of the lessons of Singapore. Black trade unions have been recognized, the Pass Laws have been abolished in certain areas and more attention is being paid to native education. The Pass Laws, incidentally, were another example of South Africa's mediaeval legislation; they made it a criminal offence for natives to appear on the streets of any city in the Transvaal or Orange Free State without a "passport" duly signed by the Pass Office. The majority of natives were forced to carry no fewer than four of the twelve different passes, which ranged from a "Daily Labourer's Pass" to a "Location Visitor's Pass", the latter being necessary whenever a native set foot in a location other than his own. One hundred thousand natives were yearly imprisoned or fined for violation of these laws. All passes had to be paid for.

Abolition of the Pass Laws was a big step towards better treatment of the natives. It happened at a time when it was believed the Japanese were about to take over neighbouring Madagascar. One South African writer said at the time: "Fear has something to do with this change of heart."

But these reforms are not enough to convince the natives that the whites are going to permit the Atlantic Charter to frame post-war reconstruction. The colour bar legislation remains, and not even the most liberal political leader has asked for its abolition. Effective repre-

sentation of the natives has not been discussed. Higher wages, adequate medical facilities, decent homes are taboo subjects. But there is one leader among the South Africans who foresees the great changes in South Africa's political and economic structure after the war. He is Prime Minister Smuts. In June, 1942, he said that there had been too little consideration in the past of the handling of the natives and the other non-European peoples (Indians and half-castes), as well as the poor whites. He declared: "South Africa is not a homogeneous country. Its human situation is as difficult and complex as any in the world. We shall only progress and make a success of this country if we can succeed in establishing harmony and balance to better these different factors. . . . No evil is so deeply rooted it cannot be dealt with. Keep away from prejudices that have been the root of many evils in this country."

General Smuts always moves ahead of public opinion. The above remarks were the topic of conversation for weeks after he had made them. And they were not well received in gold-mining circles or among the majority of Afrikaaners.

General Smuts is also far ahead of most of his people on the issue of arming the native population. He has declared that South Africa must realize that the part it plays in Allied strategy makes it vulnerable to attack. Yet natives are not allowed to receive military training or to bear arms. In 1942 Smuts said that if South Africa were to be invaded by the Japanese he would arm all the non-Europeans in the country. But there is no doubt that Smuts does not wish to wait for the Japanese. He wants to arm the natives now. Opposing his aims are the Opposition parties, a number of his own Cabinet Ministers and members of the Government Party. The Dutch Reformed Church, with great influence among the Afrikaaners, has said officially: "The natives must not fight the Japanese. The arming of non-Europeans is against the best traditions of the Afrikaaner people. The natives must be employed only in subordinate and menial capacities." It might be mentioned that leading figures in the Dutch Reformed Church are members of the subversive Ossewa Brandwag. Among the English-speaking people there is a fear that Smuts may be going too far in his advocacy of native soldiers. But they fear equally the possibility of a Japanese invasion. Up to the end of 1942 they had not yet decided which was the lesser of the two evils. Smuts was still unable to arm the natives without the risk of incurring widespread criticism from both Afrikaaners and a section of the English-speaking population.

The fact that there can be such hesitation on this issue among the whites of South Africa when their country's defence is so threatened is an indication of their deep-rooted prejudices. It is also evidence supporting the opening sentence of this chapter.

There is more hope for post-war progress in the British dependencies. Not so many decadent institutions and rotten, out-moded laws have to be eliminated. The framework for progress has always been there. The British Government has always declared the best intentions. The only trouble has been that, broadly speaking, the best intentions have never been carried out.

In post-war Africa all colonies, mandates and otherwise dependent territories, whether they be British, French, Belgian or Portuguese, should be run on the principle that self-rule is the ultimate goal. By means of big expansion in educational facilities, especially those of higher education, the native Africans should be trained and equipped to play a gradually growing part in the affairs of their respective territories. Africans must be represented on all local governing bodies, such as Legislative Councils, and this representation must increase steadily as time goes on until the entire machinery of government can be safely left in their hands. To speed this process *all* civil service posts should be open to Africans.

It should be recognized that health problems in Africa are serious, that existing medical facilities are tragically scarce and that a special full-time health commission should attend to the training of African doctors and medical aids, sending them if necessary to universities abroad. Hospitals should be extended and increased, and all natives should be subjected to compulsory vaccination.

The most pressing reform, however, is the raising of living standards. Industrial colour bars, whether legislative or merely customary, must be abolished in order to admit Africans into the higher-paid, skilled occupations. Higher wages must be paid for all work presently done by Africans so that squalor and disease may be drastically reduced. Special attention must be paid to land problems, insuring the natives sufficient fertile land to meet their needs. Every native landowner should attend a local agricultural school which will teach him modern practices in landusage. Disease-spreading kraals and locations should be burned to the ground.

In less than a decade the old myth that the blacks are intellectually inferior would be exploded. Health, adequate food, good housing and education would transform the African personality. The old evils and superstitions of tribal life—the witch doctor, for instance—would rapidly disappear. The characterization of the African as an indigent, lazy good-for-nothing would be even less accurate than it is today.

All colonial powers should be signatories to a Colonial Charter embracing the above principles. The Charter should be countersigned by important non-colonial Powers like the United States, which should share in the responsibility of rebuilding the lives of millions of Africans and of ensuring equal opportunity for all races in Africa. An International Colonial Committee must make an exhaustive study of colonial resources and work out long-range economic development schemes. The financing of Africa's rebirth can be accomplished with private money, colonial revenues and profits, Government loans and grants in aid. The poorer colonial Powers, such as Portugal, should be aided by the richer. And all territories should be open to periodic inspection by sub-committees of the International Colonial Committee.

What I have prescribed will pay dividends in time; Africa will not only become self-supporting but will contribute its resources more abundantly to the rest of the world. And the Africans will plainly demonstrate that they deserve to be treated as human beings. Already they have suffered too long for want of the opportunity.

